THE OLD TESTAMENT SUNDAY LESSONS

A. B. BATER

LONDON DIOCESAN SUNDAY SCHOOL MANUALS

FOR SCHOLARS 10–12

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THE OLD TESTAMENT SUNDAY LESSONS

London Diocesan Sunday School Manuals

Issued under the Authority of THE BISHOP OF LONDON

Editor: Rev. S. K. KNIGHT, B.D.

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THE OLD TESTAMENT SUNDAY LESSONS

BY

REV. A. B. BATER, M.A.

PRINCIPAL OF THE LICHFIELD AND SOUTHWELL DIOCESAN TRAINING COLLEGE, DERBY

[For Scholars 10–12]

NEW IMPRESSION

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COMMENDATORY NOTE

By the Bishop of London

I wish heartily God-speed to these little Manuals which are issued under the direction of my Sunday School Council. We have splendid material to use in the devotion and self-sacrifice of thousands of Sunday School teachers, and my great desire is to forge that material into a more effective instrument for moulding the lives and characters of the children committed to their care.

It is in the hope that this series of Manuals will be of great help to the teachers in preparing their lessons for the children that we now send them forth.

A. F. LONDON.

Fulham Palace, S.W.,
September 1912.

PREFACE

The series of lessons has been compiled in accordance with the Syllabus of graded Lessons for Sunday Schools drawn up by the Director of Sunday Schools in the Diocese of London. They attempt to meet the desire of the Bishop of London's Sunday School Council for a series of Manuals compiled to help teachers to give definite Church teaching and enable them to present it in an interesting and effective manner to their scholars.

The authors are alone responsible for this Manual, and the Bishop of London's Sunday School Council has no responsibility for any views that may be presented in this work.

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N.B.—If Lessons VI. and VII. are not required after Christmas or during Epiphany, they may be used after Trinity when additional Lessons are needed.

If more Lessons are required during Epiphany, Lessons XLVIII. to L. may be used.

INTRODUCTION

The series of lessons in this book is arranged as far as possible to follow the Church Lectionary, the idea being to make the Old Testament lessons read in the Church of greater living interest to the children attending the Sunday Morning and Evening Services.

The Church's seasons have been kept in mind, and some attempt has been made to harmonise the teaching of the lessons with them.

The amount of matter in the lessons presents difficulty. Most Superintendents allege that their teachers finish their lessons long before the allotted time expires. Such teachers will welcome a somewhat large amount of matter. Good teachers need, however, find no real difficulty ; with a little thought they will be able to make a selection from the matter given and in some cases to omit a whole section.

In many lessons one thought—called the leading thought—has been made prominent. It either runs throughout the lesson, or the whole lesson culminates in it. When expressed in some text or quotation, teachers should endeavour to make it the lifelong possession of the children, and should encourage its being learnt by heart. Such texts or quotations when made living by the teacher's skill become a powerful incentive to good conduct ; the same texts merely learnt would be of no value, and would not recur to the mind when most needed.

As far as possible the lessons centre round the great men of the Old Testament. The original title for the book was *Some of God's Great Men and their Doings*. Hero worship has therefore much to do with the work. Its teaching is positive rather than negative. It is the story of positive good (not of negative) that stimulates a child to right conduct. When the story of wrong-doing is taken, an effort is made to treat it so that the sympathies of the children will be enlisted on the

right side. Thus in a lesson on the Fall and the Flood, the title is "How God's Goodness was Frustrated," and the heading of the last section of the lesson is "The Man who did not frustrate the Father's Goodness."

Where passages are set down for reading, the teacher should observe care. The Bible badly read loses in value. The verses should therefore be read only by the best readers or by the teacher. When the teacher thinks fit, a selected passage may be prepared beforehand by some good reader, and heard by the teacher before the lesson, so that when produced in class it is well done.

Where no books are suggested for the teacher's preparation, a good Commentary will suffice. Every Sunday School worthy of the name will have an adequate library of books of reference for the teachers' use. Where no such library exists I would suggest a meeting of superintendent and staff to devise ways and means of providing it.

Blackboard summaries and expression work are at times suggested either during or at the close of the lesson notes; where no reference to these matters is found, teachers should provide for themselves.

In conclusion, it is right for me to say that I have been considerably assisted in the preparation of this book by some very able members of this College Staff. Whatever helpfulness the book may possess is due largely to their assistance and to the practical sympathy they have given me for many years past in all matters connected with Sunday School work.

A. B. BATER.

PRINCIPAL'S HOUSE,
TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGE,
DERBY.

THE OLD TESTAMENT SUNDAY LESSONS

Lesson I. ADVENT SUNDAY

"The Mountain of the Lord's House shall be established" (ISAIAH i., ii.)

Aim. *To impress the Leading Thoughts.* (a) "*Wash you, make you clean,*" i. 16. (b) "*Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow,*" i. 18.

PREPARATION

Title of lesson and leading thoughts to be written on blackboard (or on slips of paper to be given to children) before beginning of lesson. Tell children to notice title. Tell class they will be asked reason for such a title at end of lesson. Ask for name of Sunday. *Advent* = a coming to. What two great comings do we think of in Advent? Whose comings? To whom? Advent therefore chiefly concerns God, the Son, and ourselves.

What then is the purpose of Advent?—(*a*) To remind us of first coming, and so prepare us keep Christmas properly. (*b*) To remind us of second coming to judge world and so prepare for that coming.

Is Preparation necessary?—If King George were about to visit school, much preparation made.

What Kind of Preparation.—The school, the children, very clean; children well behaved. How then prepare for Christmas and for Second Advent? Refer leading thought. Cleanliness in heart, and therefore good action. Refer to Collect. Read it slowly. Ask children for passages in it (1) relating to Second Advent, (2) telling how to prepare—"Cast away . . . light" (write on board).

PRESENTATION

Suitability of Book of Isaiah to Advent and Christmas.—Let children turn to tables Proper Lessons for Sundays and Holy Days, and notice Old Testament lessons for Advent and Christmas. (Taken entirely from Isaiah.) Ask for (if necessary tell) reason. Isaiah (1) prophesies coming of the Christ; (2) calls people to preparation.

Now say "We are going to think about Isaiah (one of greatest and bravest men who ever lived) for a few Sundays." Tell class listen carefully to Old Testament lessons in Church, note carefully verses speaking of (1) and (2), write out at home on paper, bring to school following Sunday.

The Title Page of Isaiah. (*a*) To every book a title page. Refer to title page of Prayer Book, Bible, some book well known to class. (*b*) The title page of Isaiah. Ask class find title page of Isaiah. Lead them to see that title and first verse form title page. (*c*) What the title page teaches us. Children will say—

When he lived—Days of Uzziah, &c.
Where—Judah. Who he was—Son of Amoz.

The nature of the book. "The vision of Isaiah." Ask meaning of vision. Something seen not with bodily, but with spiritual eyes. *Cf.* Daniel's visions. Ask for source of vision (verses 2, 10, 18, 20, 24). If a vision from God, how should we hear of it and regard it? Illustrate simply. Tell class remember this when Isaiah read in Church.

Condition of Judah and Jerusalem.—(a) *The Kings.* Isaiah appears to have received his first call towards end of reign of Uzziah (vi. 1). First mention of Isaiah (2 Chron. xxvi. 22) in reign of Uzziah (tenth King after Solomon), a troublous time.

How Uzziah failed to be truly great.—He was great in many ways. (Teacher should tell class substance of 2 Chron. xxvi. 1–15, and speak of his greatness.) Danger of greatness. Refer to Nebuchadnezzar's greatness, failure, punishment. Tell legend Ptolemy Philopator; resolved enter Temple at Jerusalem; unlawful; excitement of Jews; amidst tumult Simon the Just heard praying to All-Seeing God; sudden death Egyptian King like reed broken with wind. ("Folk Lore of Holy Land.") How did greatness affect Uzziah? (2 Chron. xxvi. 16.) What would follow? Tell of brave action of priest (verses 17, 18), emphasize bravery, punishment (verse 19).

Other Kings.—Of the four Kings who succeeded two were very evil; Ahaz and Manasseh. In reign of Manasseh, great prophet Isaiah supposed to have been put to death.

(b) *The Princes.*—Read Isaiah i. 23.

(c) *The People.*—Tell children refer Isaiah i. and ii., and find verses showing evil nature of people.

They pretended to be religious; their multitude of sacrifices, i. 11; their many festivals, i. 14. *Cf.* Pharisees. Of what use Services unless we do God's will? "To obey is better than sacrifice."

The Brave Prophet.—Need for courageous servant of God. Isaiah rebukes rulers and people. He calls to repentance (i. 16, 17; ii. 5).* His warning (i. 20, 28; ii. 12, 17, 19).* His encouragement to the repentant (i. 18, 19).*

APPLICATION

How to keep Season of Advent.—See * above. Finally let children find verse which appears to speak specially of coming of Christ (ii. 2). Now ask why title of lesson was chosen, and its connection with the leading thought.

Blackboard: Title of lesson and leading thoughts and any or all of notes printed in italics as teacher may desire.

Work for Week: To write out and learn that part of Catechism which teaches how to keep season of Advent.

Lesson II. SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

The Parable of the Vineyard (Isa. v. 1–7)

Aim. *To impress God's care for man, and man's duty in return "to serve Him truly all the days of my life."*

PREPARATION

(a) *The courage of Isaiah.*—Let children recall evidences of this.

(b) *The endurance of Isaiah.*—Tell that Isaiah's courage of enduring kind: endurance hardest thing in life: easy do good short time: hard continue all life: this is highest courage: ask reference Catechism "My duty towards God . . . is to serve Him truly all days my life." *Cf.* John Baptist; Isaiah's courage similar; endured until death.

PRESENTATION

People still impenitent; had not "cast away works darkness," &c. Another rebuke necessary whatever the danger to Isaiah.

The Parable.—Isaiah tells story. (Teacher will write at head of blackboard The Parable of the Vineyard.)

Why the Parable of the Vineyard?—(Write this question on board.) People knew much about vineyards: many in Palestine: hot country: vines planted sunny slopes: people's livelihood depended partly on vineyards. (Tell parable under following heads; practise story at home.)

The Owner of the Vineyard.—(Write this heading on blackboard.) The Bible calls owner "My Beloved." Tell children to call him Lord or Master.

The Place of the Vineyard.—(Write on blackboard.) The Master gave much thought to choice of place: sought best place: wanted good vineyard, good grapes. Lord found good place: slope of hill: facing right direction: good soil: story says hill was "very fruitful."

The Preparation of the Vineyard. (Write on blackboard.) The Master gave much care to preparation: why? When children wish good garden, what preparation do they make? Fence it, remove stones, prepare soil.

Tell story dying farmer: said treasure hid in land: sons must find it: they dug land seven times: found no treasure. Then they sowed seeds: reaped splendid harvest: so found treasure: why? soil well prepared.

Master's care in preparation: fenced to exclude wild beasts: removed stones: why? planted choice vines: why? wanted good fruit: tower for watchman: winepress to turn good fruit into good wine.

The Harvest.—(Write on blackboard.) What would children expect after careful preparation of garden? What then did Master expect after his care? good grapes, good wine. State that gained grapes no better than wild grapes: his bitter disappointment.

The Master's Treatment of Vineyard. (Write on blackboard.) How would Master treat such worthless vineyard? let fence, tower, wine-press go to ruin: wild beasts would destroy vines, none would watch over vineyard, no wine be made from its bad grapes.

The Meaning of the Parable.—Teacher will draw meaning from class under heads already on board.

The Owner.—Almighty God.

The Place.—Palestine, fertile, flowing milk, honey.

The Preparation.—People fenced in from heathen neighbours by their religion and laws. Stones removed: heathen in land destroyed. Soil prepared by prophets' teaching. Watch tower built, *i.e.* King and prophets appointed to look after people.

The Harvest.—God expected good deeds, but people became friendly with heathen: worshipped false gods: despised prophets' teaching: at times served God, but could not *endure* unto lives' end.

The Treatment of Vineyard.—The people's conduct would make it impossible for God to continue His blessings: heathen should oppress them.

Reading of Isaiah v. 1–7. Read verses slowly, carefully, to familiarise children with words of Bible.

APPLICATION

Reason for reading story in Church. Our Church is God's Vineyard: we are vines of His planting.

When were we planted in the Vineyard?—"In my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven."

God's Care for His Church.—He gave His Son to die for it: Apostles and Martyrs were sent to give lives on its behalf: the Holy Spirit sent to inspire it. Our Father's expectation of good fruit.

The result of an Unfruitful Church.—Our Father's disappointment: the result, the weakening of the Church, the increasing power of its enemies, the suffering of its members. If enemies ever try to weaken our Church of England, what should be our care? greater fruitfulness in good works. Why?

Collect.—Read Collect for Sunday before Advent. How does it remind us of Isaiah? He had courage to persist in good works, "to serve God truly all the days of his life."

Work for Week: To write out a story of some brave man.

Lesson III. THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

God's Faithful Soldier (Isaiah vii., xxv.)

Aim. *To impress the leading thought*—"*Prepare ye the way of the Lord.*" "*Manfully to fight under Christ's Banner.*"

PREPARATION

Reference to first lesson—

(1) King Uzziah and his failure to be great.
(2) The four Kings who followed him.
(3) The princes.
(4) The people.

PRESENTATION

Connection between the conduct of Kings and people.

Effect of a good King.—Speak of likeness between leaders and their people. Ask for examples of good leaders, *e.g.* David. Draw from children effect of his example. His people would follow in the right path.

Refer also to good efforts of Hezekiah and effect. Read and comment upon 2 Chron. xxix. 32, 36; 2 Chron. xxx. 13, 15.

Refer to old proverb, "As is the Priest, so is the congregation." Also, As is the King, &c.

Effect of a bad King.—Show how bad King would exert evil influence on people.

Tell story of teacher who wished withdraw lad from evil companions: he placed several good apples on plate with rotten apple in midst: told lad to place them in cupboard: after lapse of sufficient time, teacher sent lad for plate of apples; he brought them, but nearly all were touched with decay.

So King Uzziah and two of the four kings who succeeded him helped to make people of Judah evil.

Stories of Imitation.—Teacher should tell one or two stories showing our tendency to imitate. We imitate almost unconsciously what impresses us. "We are what we are almost entirely in virtue of imitation." How necessary then for good examples to be set. How is this indicated in the Prayer Book? We pray for King, princes, governors, clergy, and people.

The Grief of Isaiah.

Evil condition of land.—Three out of five kings evil: many princes evil: people mostly the same: each made the other worse: and the good was neither sufficiently strong nor lasting to produce any abiding effect.

Two Kinds of Grief.—Useless and useful.

Useless.—Tell story mother who lost son: son killed in accident:

mother grieved so much that for many years did not do proper duty in home.

Useful.—That kind of grief which makes man resolve to fight the harder notwithstanding his troubles. Isaiah's grief of this kind: he must be useful: must prepare the way of the Lord, fight manfully under His banner. But how?

WHAT SHALL ISAIAH DO?

(a) *He will continue to rebuke evil.* Give an example, *e.g.* the rebuke of Ahaz. In reign of Ahaz, King of Judah, the King, fearing Syria and Israel (Isa. vii. 1), sought help from Assyria, an idolatrous nation. Isaiah knew that this would lead Judah into close connection with idolaters and so cause the Lord's people to sin even more than before. He therefore boldly rebuked King Ahaz (Isa. vii. 17).

But it is not enough to rebuke the evil. Tell parable of man out of whom an evil spirit was cast: man now wants new spirit: he takes seven others worse than the first. Why? He had not been taught to love the good. Not enough to tell boy not to be coward: he must be led to admire courage. So Isaiah resolves to do more than rebuke evil: he must fight under God's banner in another way also.

(b) *He will try to make people love goodness.* How?

(1) *By his own example.*—Tell story of Eastern King, who marching through difficult country found way blocked by snow and ice: necessary for soldiers cut way through portion of road: soldiers discouraged: threw down axes: King seizing an axe began cut path for himself: soldiers ashamed: first an officer, then some soldiers followed example: soon way was clear. So Isaiah's example must have helped many: thus he fought under God's banner.

(2) *By his teaching.*—He spoke of God's goodness to His people. (Read Isa. xxv. 4.) He said that God would bless His people if they repented. With plenty (xxv. 6). With happiness (xxv. 8, 9).

If time allows let good readers (sometimes Teacher) read whole of chapter xxv. without further explanation.

APPLICATION

Isaiah's Prayer.—Children may be asked what Isaiah would probably pray for in his time of anxiety. For strength "to prepare the way of the Lord." "To fight manfully under His banner."

Children's Prayer.—Conclude by saying, "That will be a suitable prayer for you boys and girls if you wish to be God's faithful soldiers."

Work for Week: Children may read through Collect for Day, copy out and learn part which recalls this lesson, and write something about it.

Lesson IV. FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

"This is the Way, Walk ye in it" (Write on blackboard)
(Isaiah xxx. 1–26)

Aim. *To make children realise how best to prepare for Christmas.*

PREPARATION

Refer to title of previous lesson. Children are going to learn more about the fearless Isaiah.

PRESENTATION

Isaiah's Ambition for Judah.

Isaiah's Care for Judah: already shown: he loved his people as father loves children. What does father wish for children? (To be great.) Isaiah wished Judah to be great in best sense. *True Greatness depends on Goodness.* "This is the Way, walk ye in it."

Pharaoh, King of Egypt at time of Exodus, was great in power and wealth: but not truly great. How do we know? He did not walk in true way: would not let people go.

Moses was a poor man: but trusted in God: knew Way and walked in it.

To-day we think little of Pharaoh's power, but frequently talk of greatness of Moses. Why? His greatness meant goodness.

A great Bishop once addressing boys, spoke of his little son. "I hoped, years ago," he said, "that if I ever had a son he would be a great man. But now I hope that he will be a good man." The Bishop understood that true greatness depends on goodness.

Isaiah knew that his people would be great only when good. What then will he do? Try to win them from evil to good, to teach them "This is the way," &c.

The Alliance with Egypt (Isa. xxx.).

The King of Judah was Hezekiah, on the whole good, but not so good in Isaiah's opinion as King should be.

His lack of complete trust in God.—A really good King and people would have fully trusted in God. "My duty towards God is . . . to put my *whole* trust in Him." In chapter xxx. we shall see that they trusted in this world, being eager for alliance with Egypt.

Egypt: governed by new King Tirhakah. He had come from upper Nile (map): subdued Egypt: was preparing for conflict with Assyria (map), whom all nations feared. Tirhakah sent to ask Hezekiah to join in conflict against Assyria (read xviii. 1, 2).

Hezekiah and counsellors favoured alliance: sent ambassadors to meet those of Egypt. (Read xxx. 1, 2.)

Why should people of Judah have trusted the Lord? They knew

great things done for their people in past. Ask for some of them. When people walked in God's way, and fully trusted, they were safe.

But Hezekiah is called a good King, and his people were better than they had been. Why did they not trust God? Not yet as good as they should have been.

How does chapter XXX. show this? Ask child read—(Verse 1). "Trusted in Egypt." (Verse 9). "A rebellious people." (Verse 10). Would not listen fully to prophets.

ISAIAH'S DENUNCIATION.

(*a*) Isaiah predicted woe: read verse 1. What reason is given in verse 2? People had forgotten God: not asked at His mouth: trusted in Egypt.

(*b*) Egypt should be of no use to Judah. Read and question on verses 3, 7. See also words of Assyrian Leader, Isa. XXXVI. 6.

ISAIAH POINTS OUT THE TRUE WAY.

(Divide blackboard by vertical line. On left write The True Way.)

Let children find way from—

(Verse 15). "In returning and rest" (write phrase on blackboard), *i.e.* in giving up friendship with heathen. "In quietness and confidence" (blackboard), *i.e.* in remaining quietly in own land, obeying and trusting God.

(Verse 20). In hearing God's messengers (blackboard).

(Verse 22). In putting away wrong things (blackboard).

ISAIAH'S PROMISE OF A GOLDEN AGE TO THOSE WHO WALK IN THE WAY.—(Write on right of blackboard, The Golden Age.)

Read verses mentioned below: encourage children to supply phrases: write each phrase on blackboard: comment where necessary.

(Verse 18). God will be gracious; will bless.

(Verse 19). Will preserve their land; will take away their fears (of their enemies); hear their prayers.

(Verse 23). will give rain in due season
(Verse 25). will give many rivers and streams
} A great blessing in a hot country.

(Verse 26). will give much spiritual light.

APPLICATION

What Sunday are we keeping to-day?

Advent means Coming. What coming shall we think of this week? On what day?

The first coming of Christ began the real Golden Age. Why has the Golden Age not fully come? (People have not fully walked in Way.)

What then will be our best preparation for Christmas? (Try hardest to walk in Way.)

Work for Week: Children will write out and learn two or more verses of hymn showing how to walk in Way.

Lesson V. THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

The King of the Golden Age (Isaiah ix. 1–7, xxxv.)

Aim. (a) *To teach something of Isaiah's prophecies of the Messiah and of the Church.* (b) *To impress and make living the words—*

"*Unto us a Child is born,*
Unto us a Son is given."
"*Of the increase of His government and peace*
There shall be no end."
"*No lion shall be there,*
Nor any ravenous beast."
"*They shall obtain joy and gladness,*
And sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

PREPARATION

(*a*) Before the children enter school write very neatly on the blackboard the title and the words to be impressed.

(*b*) Make no comment on these words until they come in the lesson, but let a good reader (or teacher) read them slowly and impressively before lesson begins.

(*c*) Refer to previous lesson and to Golden Age. Ask why it seemed so distant. (People far from the Way.) Before the heart of the people could become sound a great change must take place.

PRESENTATION

A Great Leader was Needed.—Give one or more examples of times when great troubles called for a great leader; *e.g.* (1) *Time of Magna Charta.* England in wretched condition: groaned under oppression of King John and the interference of the Pope. The King imprisoned people without trial and robbed them, making lives miserable. The Pope interfering wrongfully (he was a man whom all Europe feared), brought about an interdict: churches closed six years: bells rusted in silent steeples. When John owned Pope as Overlord, indignation could endure no longer. Cry from people had gone up, How long, O Lord, how long! Only miracle could relieve misery. Many brave men arose, but their leader was Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury. When he was born, people of England, had they known, might have sung "Unto us a child is born," for he was indeed a great leader; or,

(2) Time of Napoleon I and the Duke of Wellington.

Judah's troubles were so great that Isaiah recognised impossibility of his bringing about the Golden Age. People needed Great Deliverer, who could triumph over all evil—a King for the Golden Age.

Isaiah's Prophecy of the King of the Golden Age.—Isaiah's Faith so great, that he knew God would send King to free people from sin, and set up Golden Age. So he sang his great song—

(a) *The Misery of the People.*—Let children read verses mentioned below and select suitable phrases: the Teacher making brief comment.

(ix. 2). "Walked in darkness." "Dwell in land of shadow of death." (ix. 4). "The yoke of his burden." "The staff of his shoulder." "The rod of his oppressor."

(b) *The Relief of the People.* (ix. 2). "Have seen a great light." "Upon them hath the light shined." (ix. 4). "Thou hast broken the yoke," &c.

(c) *The Coming of the King.*—The children will first look at board and say which sentence speaks of this, "Unto us a Child is born," &c.

(d) *The Titles of the King.* (ix. 6). "Wonderful." Why? (Would do a wonderful work.) "Mighty God." Why? (God alone could do the work.) "The Everlasting Father." Why? "The Prince of Peace." Why?

(e) *The Kingdom.*—Its marks. (Write following phrases on board.) (ix. 7). Continual increase. A growing peace. Judgment and justice. (xxxv. 9). No violence. Joy and gladness. Neither sorrow nor sighing.

The Teacher will try to show how beautiful the world would be if the Kingdom were fully come.

APPLICATION

The First Christmas Day.—Speak of birth of Jesus. Ask whether anything was said or done at time of birth which recalled Isaiah's prophecy.

(1) "*Prince of Peace.*"—Angels sang "On earth, peace."

(2) "*Everlasting Father.*"—Fathers try save children from wrong. Angels sang "Unto you is born . . . a Saviour."

(3) *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.*—Simeon sang in Temple "To be a light," &c.

(4) "*Wonderful.*"—Simeon sang "To be the glory," &c.

The King and His Kingdom.—Jesus is then the King of the Golden Age. His Kingdom is the Church.

Marks.	*Our responsibility?*
Continual increase.	To extend Church.
A growing peace.	To promote peace.
Judgment and justice.	To do no wrong.
No violence.	"To do no violence in word or deed."
Joy and gladness.	To take joy and gladness with us.
Neither sorrow nor sighing.	To cause neither sorrow nor sighing.

Conclusion.—Read sentences on board; ask children which like best, and why.

Work for Week: To write exercise on any sentence on board.

Lesson VI. FOR USE AFTER CHRISTMAS IN EPIPHANY, OR AFTER TRINITY AS REQUIRED

Hezekiah—From Strength to Strength (2 Kings xviii., xix.)

Aim. *To teach that Hezekiah was great because he was good.*

PREPARATION

Introduce the lesson by explaining that after the great kings David and Solomon had reigned, there was a long succession of kings in Judah (for about 400 years). One of the greatest of these was Hezekiah, who lived and reigned during the lifetime of Isaiah the prophet (that is, more than 200 years after the death of Solomon).

PRESENTATION

1. *Hezekiah's position under Assyrian overlords.*—A map will be necessary here showing the borders of Persia, Assyria, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt.

Explain that the Kings of the Jews were no longer absolutely independent. A great nation, the Assyrians, had made successful war against the peoples of Israel and Judah, the Philistines and even of Egpyt, and these now formed part of a large Empire. The Assyrians were masters of the whole district from Euphrates to Nile. Although they allowed the native kings to reign, they exacted regular tribute and controlled all intercourse between one people and another. Occasionally a people thought itself strong enough to throw off this submission to the Assyrian overlord.

2. *Brief Summary of Hezekiah's Reign.*—Let the children read 2 Kings xviii. 1–8. The verses contain just the bare facts: (1) that Hezekiah was a good man and did what was right; (2) that he suppressed idolatry; (3) that he was prominent among other kings *because* he trusted in his God; (4) that he dared to rebel against Assyria.

By such questions as the following draw these main points from the children. How did Hezekiah do "that which was right in God's sight"? Was he only concerned that he himself should keep God's commandments? Would his task be an easy one? What was it that helped him in his great responsibility? What words show that God helped him because he trusted in Him (verse 7)? Why would Hezekiah try to throw off the yoke of the Assyrians? Because he longed that his people should be free.

Explain that children have been reading a description of a reign of twenty-nine years compressed into eight verses.

3. *How Hezekiah became Great.*—Did Hezekiah become such a great king all at once? No, he had to strive and contend with great difficulties, and did not always succeed. The verses we have read describe what he *became*. Suggest that it was his constant striving

amidst difficulties to do what he knew was right, that made him finally strong and great. Two stories from his reign show this.

4. *Hezekiah's Revolt and Submission.*—Now the history is in more detail, and is much more interesting. Tell the story contained in verses 13–16. Hezekiah had made the city of Jerusalem as strong as he could to meet this attack (2 Chron. xxxii.), but his people were despondent and afraid (see Isa. xxix. 2–4), and his councillors advised him to submit (Isa. xxii. 15–19), which Hezekiah did, with the results described in verses 15, 16. Can you suggest reasons why Hezekiah submitted? Perhaps it was that he did not yet trust God sufficiently; he was not yet "strong in the Lord of Hosts and in His mighty power": he was not yet "standing in God's great might."

5. *Sennacherib's later Attack.*—On another occasion Hezekiah braved Sennacherib's anger and asked the King of Egypt to join in rebelling against Assyrian rule (verse 21).

Describe the Assyrian embassy, reproducing the message of verses 19–25 as accurately as possible, bringing out its scornful tone and its boastfulness. Why would such promises be made to the Jewish people? To try to weaken their loyalty to Hezekiah. Remind of people's cowardice on a previous occasion. How did they stand the test now? See verse 36. What does this show?

6. *Isaiah's Comfort.*—Tell the narrative of chapter xix. 1–7. Contrast with Hezekiah's behaviour on the previous occasion; he has learned to rely on God's help. Reproduce as closely as possible Isaiah's message—"Be not afraid."

7. *Sennacherib's Letter.*—Describe the boastful and insulting letter, and Hezekiah's reception of it. What does this show as to Hezekiah's character?

8. *Hezekiah's Prayer* should be read by the class and its main ideas made clear: God is the only true God: the Assyrians have overcome nations who worship idols, but Hezekiah expresses his perfect trust in God: the children will be able to give the spirit of the prayer in answer to such questions, Of what does Hezekiah feel quite sure as he prays? Why is he quite sure (God is the living God)? Contrast Hezekiah's attitude now and earlier. Why do we feel that God will help him now? Because he is asking for God's strength.

9. *God's Answer.*—Let the children read verses 35, 36. Contrast Sennacherib's weakness because of his boastfulness and trust in his own powers; Hezekiah's strength in the support of God.

APPLICATION

In every struggle that is the true source of real strength.

Passages for Teacher's Study: 2 Kings xviii., xix.; 2 Chron. xxxii.

Hymn used: "Soldiers of Christ, arise."

Lesson VII. FOR USE AFTER CHRISTMAS IN EPIPHANY, OR AFTER TRINITY AS REQUIRED

I. The Discipline of Disappointment (Ezra i.–x.)

Aim. *To teach the true source of strength; "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts"* (Zech. iv. 6).

PREPARATION

The same map will be needed as for last lesson.

1. *The Persian Empire under Cyrus.*—Remind the children of the extent of the Babylonish Empire as shown on the map. Tell that a stronger neighbour, Cyrus the Persian, at last overcame the Kings of Babylon, and absorbed their Empire. He found living in Babylon great numbers of people who had been forcibly led away from their own countries. As a new King, he would wish to please his new subjects. What would please these captive peoples?

2. *Cyrus' Decree* gave permission to those who had been captives to return to their own lands, carrying with them the images of their gods. Among them were the Jews; instead of images of God (which of course they would not possess) what treasures were they allowed to bring back to their own land? (chap. i.).

3. *Zerubbabel's Temple.*—Picture the delight of these Jews, after their long march through the desert, on their return to their own city Jerusalem, desolate though it would look. What building would they want to restore as soon as they could? Describe very briefly their eager efforts to do this (chap. iii.).

4. *Samaritan Opposition.*—Their neighbours in the north wished to join in the work; but they were not strictly Jews, they had married foreigners and were idol worshippers, and so were refused a share (chap. iv.).

5. *The work stopped.*—The Samaritans were so indignant that they became enemies of the Jews; and by representing to the Persians that the Jews would become too strong and rebel, succeeded in getting a decree from the Persian king putting a stop to the building of the Temple. What would be the feelings of the Jews? But although they would be bitterly disappointed they did not despair, nor did they forget; for, nine years after, they began again to build, and despite more opposition succeeded in completing the Temple. What quality do you admire in these Jews? How they would rejoice over the finished building (see chap. vi. 16, 22).

PRESENTATION

[The brief summary of Ezra, chaps i.–vi., will have been told as quickly and as vividly as possible in order to emphasize the main lesson

to be learnt from the work of Ezra and Nehemiah—energetic and persevering effort in spite of disaster and opposition.]

1. *The Mission of Ezra.*—For nearly sixty years we have no history of how the Jews fared. The next news we have of them is that Ezra, the Scribe, living in Babylon, asks permission to go to Jerusalem. Let children read chap. vii. 6. Why does he ask? (verse 10). Evidently he had heard that the Jews were in need of a teacher. Read verses 12–15. Who must have influenced Artaxerxes? Verses 27, 28.

2. *The Journey.*—Picture the events described in chap. viii. 15–20; the assembly—the discovery that there were no Levites for priestly service; these, when summoned, are entrusted with the sacred treasures. Picture the great caravan of men, women, and children with their camels laden, prepared for a weary march of many days across the desert. Read verses 21, 22. Why were these people too proud to ask protection? They were determined to trust to God's help. So without any soldiers to defend them they braved the dangers of the journey. How did the journey prosper? Let children read verses 31, 32. Picture the enthusiasm with which good Jews would receive Ezra and help him in his endeavours.

3. *The Condition in which Ezra found Jerusalem.*—Ezra had a difficult task before him; he found that after all those years the Jews had not yet rebuilt the city wall; the richer people oppressed the poor; taxation was heavy; the Temple worship was neglected, and the Jews were very careless about keeping the Sabbath. Read ix. 1–4.

4. *The Cleansing of the Jewish People.*—Why should it be such a grief to Ezra? Why do they call themselves "the holy seed"? Explain that foreign marriages endangered their existence as God's chosen people—a distinction of which all good Jews were jealously proud. It was a sin also, because it was against God's command. How does the people's sin affect Ezra? Let children read chap. ix. 6. What was the result of his grief and confession. On the people? (Chap. x. 1–5.)

APPLICATION

End of Ezra's Record.—Here Ezra's account ends abruptly; but we can tell even from this part of his work only, what kind of man he was—one who was willing *to try again*, who persevered in face of difficulty, who was keenly eager that his own people, the Jews, should do what was right. The children should be able to describe Ezra's character.

Passages for Teacher's Study.—The narrative portions of the book of Ezra.

Book of reference used, Cambridge Bible for schools (Ezra and Nehemiah); especially the introductory chapter.

Hymn Suggested: Fight the Good Fight.

Lesson VIII. THE SUNDAY NEXT BUT ONE BEFORE SEPTUAGESIMA

The Book of Books and the Five Books

Aim. (a) *To introduce the children to the further study of the Bible and the Pentateuch.* (b) *To invest with special interest the words—*

"*Holy men of God*
Spake as they were moved
By the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. i. 21).

PREPARATION

(*a*) Before the children enter the schoolroom write on blackboard the title of the lesson and the special text in an attractive way.

(*b*) As the lesson of respect for holy things will be somewhat impressed during this lesson, try to prepare for it by seeing that Bibles and Prayer Books are given out with care and treated well.

(*c*) At beginning of lesson read the special text: then ask for the collect suggested by the text. Read it slowly. Which part of collect is chiefly suggested? ("Who hast caused all holy scriptures to be written"). Now say Collect states why Bible was written. Ask children to find the phrases—(1) "for our learning," (2) to give us "the blessed hope of everlasting life."

PRESENTATION

The Title Page of the Bible.

Let children find and read first part of title page.

Bible (Greek biblia = a collection of writings): hence a book containing smaller books: a book of books. Write word Bible on blackboard under "The book of books."

Holy: Draw special attention to this word. Ask children to find reasons from special text for calling Bible holy. (Written by holy men: inspired by Holy Spirit: it is therefore the Word of God.)

Proper Treatment of Holy Things.—Ask for names of other holy things. What commandment demands respect for them? (Third chiefly.) What part of Duty towards God? ("To honour His holy Name and His Word.") How can we show respect for Bibles?

Laxity in paying Honour.—Where is there great danger of forgetting that Bible is holy? (In schools and colleges.) Why? (Treated frequently like ordinary lesson book.) How will you help to change this? Speak of members of choir of little country church each of whom keeps books with great care in cloth case when not in use. Their desire?

Parts of Bible.—Old Testament and New Testament.

Testament (Latin *testis* = a witness), something that witnesses or tells. A will is a testament. Why? (It witnesses or tells the wish of the person who made it.) Why call the Bible a Testament? (It witnesses or tells God's wishes for man.)

Contents.—Turn to list of contents: let children see that

Old Testament	contains 39 books.
New Testament	contains 27 books.
Bible	contains 66 books.

It is then truly a "book of books."

The Pentateuch.—(Write Pentateuch on blackboard under The Five Books. The name is derived from Greek word meaning The Five Books.) The first part of the Bible containing the five books, Genesis to Deuteronomy.

English Names.—Say that the names in the English Bible are the same, or almost exactly the same, as those found in the Greek translation of the Old Testament made at Alexandria, called the Septuagint, with the exception of Numbers, which gives the *meaning* of the name.

Reason for the English Names. Write the names and meanings on the blackboard as they occur.

NAMES.	MEANINGS.	REASONS.
Genesis.	An origin or beginning.	(It is a history of beginnings.)
Exodus.	A going out.	(It contains an account of the Exodus.)
Leviticus.	Pertaining to Levi.	(It speaks largely of matters pertaining to family of Levi.)
Numbers.	——	(It begins and ends with a numbering of the people.)
Deuteronomy.	The Second Law.	(It gives the Law a second time.)

The children should be able to give or to find from their Bibles the reason for the names in our Bible.

Ask why the English names are better than the Hebrew.

Conclusion: If there is time let children read Hymn 599 (A. and M.). Ask which verse strikes them most strongly, and why? This will close the lesson with the special text.

Work for Week: Children (1) to write out during the week a list of the beginnings spoken of in Genesis, or (2) to read through chaps. i. and ii.

Lesson IX. THE SUNDAY BEFORE SEPTUAGESIMA

The Pentateuch (The Five Books)

Aim. (a) *To arouse further interest with regard to the Pentateuch.*
(b) *To deepen the impression of the words—*

> *"Holy men of God*
> *Spake as they were moved*
> *By the Holy Ghost"* (2 Pet. i. 21).

PREPARATION

(*a*) Before the children enter, write title and special text on blackboard.

(*b*) See that all Bibles are ready at hand, and give special care to their treatment during lesson.

(*c*) Refer to previous lesson. Question on meaning of Bible, Testament, Pentateuch, contents of Pentateuch, meanings of names of books. Then finally ask, Who wrote the Pentateuch? Children will answer Moses. Say that you will have something to say about this later. First of all, you are going to talk about compilations. (Write Compilation on blackboard.)

PRESENTATION

A Compilation is a book written by two or more people and put together by one or more other people, *e.g.*—

Each volume of the Children's Encyclopædia. Why?
The Bible. Why?
The Books of Kings. Why?
The Books of Chronicles. Why?

The Pentateuch is a Compilation.—(Write on blackboard.) Say that children will see that it must be a compilation. Turn to titles of different books. Children will see that each is called a "Book of Moses."

Did Moses compile it?—Titles seem to say that he did. Read Deut. xxxi. 9. "And Moses wrote this law and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi." (See also Deut. xxxi. 24.) Moses therefore wrote the Law. But tell children to look at last chapter of Deuteronomy which contains account of Moses' death: this must have been written by another man. Moses perhaps wrote much but not all.

Moses was specially fitted to write much of the Pentateuch.

(1) His education. He was educated like a prince in all the knowledge of the most learned among the Egyptians.

(2) His opportunity for special knowledge. From the Egyptians he would possibly hear theories as to the order of Creation. From the Israelites he would hear the stories of the Patriarchs, and also

perhaps the accounts which Abram brought from Ur of the Chaldees with regard to the Creation and the Flood.

Ask who would give Moses these accounts. (*a*) His mother who nursed him; (*b*) The chief of the people in later years.

(3) He was what the text calls "Holy."

Opinion of Modern Scholars.—Modern scholars have carefully examined the Pentateuch. They examine particularly the style of the language. Different writers have different styles; *e.g.* the language of Milton differs from that of Tennyson. Scholars are of opinion that different people have written different parts of the Pentateuch at different times, and that these parts were all fitted together at a later date.

When then should the Books be called the Books of Moses? Begin with examples of other books.

Books of Samuel.—Samuel could not have written all. His death is spoken of in 1 Sam. xxviii. 3. He may have written part. The books were probably put together by compiler. Why then do books bear Samuel's name? Because (1) he may have written part (2) the books speak chiefly of his work and its continuation.

Psalms of David.—Turn to Psalms lxxv., lxxvi., lxxvii. in the Bible. Children will note name of writer. David therefore did not write all Psalms. Book put together by compiler. Why then does Prayer Book call the book The Psalms of David? Because David wrote many of them and encouraged the use of psalms in public worship.

The Pentateuch bears the name of Moses because (1) He probably wrote a part of it. (2) He is the man with whom the Pentateuch is chiefly concerned. The last four books speak of him at great length.

When was the Pentateuch probably finally Compiled?—(Write this on blackboard.) Ask when people are usually stirred up to work for God. (When full of gratitude.) Ask for such times. Say that after return from captivity Jews were very grateful. Their best men wished to do their best for God's service. They then probably undertook the final putting together of the Pentateuch. How would they set to work? (Would take the Law of Moses and other accounts and put them together into one complete account.)

But would such work be in agreement with the words of the special text? —Lead the children to give the three following points—

(1) It would be a good work. Why?

(2) It would be done by good men.

(3) Good men doing good work must be moved by the Holy Ghost.

Ask child to read verse 2, Hymn 599 (A. and M.).

Work for Week: To write out on paper either (*a*) the order of the Creation as given in Genesis i., or (*b*) a hymn speaking of the Creation.

Lesson X. SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY

"And God saw that it was Good" (GENESIS i.)

Aim. (a) *To deepen children's sense of God's goodness in preparing world for man's coming, and in making man in His Image and Likeness.* (b) *To stimulate children's desire to love and obey the "Giver of all goodness."*

PREPARATION

(*a*) Write title of lesson on blackboard.

(*b*) Ask child to repeat text learnt in previous lesson. "Holy men," &c.

(*c*) Say, We shall now begin to study first part of book written by some of those "Holy men of God."

PRESENTATION

Genesis.—Refer to Hebrew name for this book—"In the beginning." Ask for meaning of Genesis (origin or beginning). Why called Genesis? (Gives account of many beginnings.) Find Genesis i. Tell children to find verses mentioning beginnings.

v. 1. The heaven and the earth.

First Day. v. 3. light (not beginning of light, but beginning of light to reach earth).*

Second Day. v. 6. division of the waters. (Waters on earth and waters in sky separated.)

Third Day. { v. 9. separation of sea and land.
v. 9. grass, herbs, and trees.

Fourth Day. v. 16. Sun, moon, and stars (not their beginning, but the beginning of their being visible from earth's surface).*

Fifth Day. v. 21. Fish and fowl.

Sixth Day. { v. 25. creeping things and beasts.
v. 26. Man.

Genesis is then suitable name for the book.

Refer to points marked *. Explain why light came on first day, but sun was not seen until fourth. In very early times earth very hot: water would not remain on it: all water in air in form of cloud, &c.: so much cloud that light could not get through: *cf.* thick fog in London. As earth got cooler clouds became thinner: on first day light came through clouds to earth. Earth grew still cooler: more water remained on surface: clouds grew thinner and separated; between them sun could be seen: this was fourth day.

The Days.—Draw attention to phrase, "the evening and the morning were the —— day." Jewish days reckoned as beginning at sunset. Jewish sabbath lasts from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.

Meaning of Day.—We understand that a day in Gen. i. means an age, a long period of time. *Cf.* In Isaiah's day = in the time of Isaiah. The six days in Gen. i. show that our God worked for six long ages in making world, and carried out work of Creation gradually and in orderly stages.

The Goodness of God.—Tell children that one sentence about God occurs several times in chap. i. What phrase? "And God saw that it was good." What does this show us? (God loved good things.) What then did writer of chap. i. wish us to know? (That God was good; he made good things and rejoiced in them.)

Boys in woodwork class make good things for homes. How do they feel about them? (Glad.) That is one way of being like God, making good things and rejoicing in them.

How does writer of chap. i. try to make us remember God's goodness? (Says same thing many times.) How many times? (Six.)

God's Goodness to All, but Specially to Man.—(Divide blackboard by vertical line. On left write God's Goodness to Man.) Let children supply following.

I. He made all good things for man. (Left of blackboard.) How we know? (*a*) He made man last; (*b*) Read verse 28, He gave every thing to man.

II. He worked more than five long ages in making world for man. (Left of blackboard.)

III. Read verse 27. He made Man in His own likeness. (Left of blackboard.) A great honour: thousands of things made, but only one in His likeness. In what ways like God? (*a*) Man has free will: he can choose for himself; (*b*) He can live in holiness; (*c*) Man's soul will live for ever.

APPLICATION

Man's Recognition of Goodness of God. (On right side of blackboard write Man's Duty.) Work out with children corresponding duties—

I. He will love the Giver of Goodness. (Right of blackboard.) *Cf.* Love of children for parents. How shown? How show love to God, to Church, to people?

II. He will be willing to serve God truly all the days of his life. (Right of blackboard.)

III. If boy resembled great General, what would he probably try to do? To be like General in bravery. Man is made in God's likeness. He will then strive to grow more like God. (Write this phrase on right of blackboard.) How? What special season is coming which will help you to do these things?

Hymn 573 (A. and M.).

Work for Week: To read through Genesis i. and then to say on paper how God continued His kindness to Man.

Lesson XI. SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY (Genesis ii., iii., vi.)

How the Great Father's Goodness was Frustrated

Aim. *To try to kindle a desire in the children's minds not to frustrate the Great Father's Goodness, but to be like Noah who "walked with God."*

PREPARATION

(*a*) Title on blackboard as in previous lessons.

(*b*) Refer to the Great Father's labour of love as shown in Gen. i. and ii., and man's duty to the Father.

PRESENTATION

How the Goodness of an Earthly Father is Frustrated.—Point to and read title of lesson. Explain frustrated (made vain, or useless, of no effect).

Picture earthly father spending time working for son. Show how he denies himself pleasure in order to give son good education, that son may do well in after life. Let children imagine feeling of father at finding son growing up careless, unthankful, disobedient. Father's work and self-denial seem thrown away.

How a Boy's good Work may be Frustrated.—Picture boy (or girl) working day after day in woodwork (or needlework) class at making some good and useful article. Describe his delight at seeing it grow more complete with every minute given to it: his hope of taking it home to surprise his parents. Then picture shock of finding it one day spoilt by some evil person: his grief.

How the Great Father's Goodness was Frustrated.—Speak again of Great Father: His long work for Man: His wish for Man to do well. What will be result of it?

The Father's Goodness to Man.

Man's delightful home. Read ii. 8, 9, 10. (Comment briefly.)

Man's delightful work. Read ii. 15.

Man's special companion. Read ii. 18, 21, 22, 23.

The Father's One Command.

Man has everything necessary for happiness. Surely he will do all that he ought. The Great Father gives one command. Read ii. 16, 17.

How Man Frustrates the Father's Goodness.—Read iii. 1–6, slowly and carefully. Comment is unnecessary.

The Trouble Sin Caused.—

(*a*) Fear entered into the world. Read iii. 8, 9, 10. Man had never before been afraid. No good man need be afraid of the Great Father.

(*b*) Trouble to the woman. Read iii. 16.

(*c*) Trouble to the man. Read iii. 17, 18, 19.

} We shall see how soon these troubles begin.

(*d*) Trouble to both. Read iii. 23, 24. Picture the loss of their beautiful home with its peace and rest.

How Evil Flourished. The Harvest of Thorns and Thistles.—Touch very briefly upon what follows, but try to show that one wrong brings many others in its train. Give some simple example, *e.g.* A theft will lead to lying: a person who has once stolen or lied is more easily led astray afterwards: for his theft, punishment may fall on innocent person who in his anger may do wrong also.

Ask how sin of Adam brought many further wrongdoings. Lead children to show—

(*a*) How Adam and Eve were punished through their children. The taint of evil was passed on: Cain brought murder into world and frustrated his parents' desires: Abel was lost to his parents. Show how ii. 16 and ii. 17 were being fulfilled.

(*b*) How the one bad seed sown produced a whole harvest of evils, for before Flood nearly all people were evil. Read vi. 5, 11.

The Great Father's Disappointment and His Resolve.—Briefly refer to this. Can God suffer grief? Refer to text "Jesus Wept." Read vi. 6. What will the Father do? Read vi. 7, and comment briefly.

The Man who did not Frustrate the Father's Goodness.—One man only had found favour with God at this time—Noah. For his sake his family should be saved.

The Reason.—Read vi. 8, 9, 22; vii. 5. Ask children which of these verses they prefer. If they do not give vi. 9, teacher will supply it. "Noah walked with God." Ask for other examples of men who "walked with God."

APPLICATION

Make application quite brief. Say, You boys will have to make up your minds as to what you will do in life. Will you, like the people before the Flood, spend your lives in spoiling that which is good? Or will you, like Noah, preserve and increase the good?

Refer to coming of Lent and its purpose to strengthen us for helping in the work of the Great Father, for becoming like Noah, who "walked with God." Recall verse "This is the Way, walk ye in it."

Hymn 541 (A. and M.).

Work for Week: Print on large sheet of paper, and colour either of the texts:

"Noah walked with God."
"This is the Way, walk ye in it."

Blackboard: Title and chief headings.

Lesson XII. QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY

How the Great Father brings HOPE back again to the World (Genesis ix., xi., xii.)

Aim. (a) *To show that God's Goodness is unending.* (b) *To help prepare for the season of Lent.*

PREPARATION

Refer to sin of Adam and wickedness of people before Flood. God punishes people, but shows that He means to bring better times to the earth. Evil had entered in, but evil should one day be finally overcome. Why does He give this Hope? So that man should never faint under his difficulties, but fight on bravely.

PRESENTATION

When the Great Father gave Hope.

(a) *After the Fall.*—When condemning the serpent, God used wonderful words. Read Gen. iii. 15. A strange verse: it has carried Hope with it. How? "It shall bruise thy head." The seed of woman should in time overcome serpent of evil. The verse is prophetic of Jesus. When did He bruise serpent's head? At resurrection. How? By overcoming death.

So in midst of gloom of Fall, God made light of Hope to shine. Man was given something better to look forward to.

(b) *Just before the Flood.*—World filled full of evil: apparently hopeless. But before Flood God began work. How? (Selected good man Noah, who "walked with God," to be saved with his family. These better people should help to people the world with good.)

(c) *After the Flood.*—God continued to give Hope. Noah grateful for being saved offered sacrifice to God. The Bible says that God smelled sweet savour; *i.e.* He was pleased with sacrifice. How did He give fresh Hope to the world?

(ix. 1). He blessed Noah.

(ix. 11). He made covenant with Noah promising never again to drown world. The covenant means more than this. What? (He would continue to watch over His people.)

The Sign of Hope.—ix. 16. The rainbow. Whenever we see rainbow, of what should it remind us? (God's covenant with us: His continual goodness.)

(d) *At the Call of Abram.*—After Flood, people became evil: forgot

meaning of sign of rainbow. The Great Father knew it would be necessary to find a man to be head of His chosen people. What kind of man would he seek? Like to whom? (Noah, who "walked with God.")

Chaldæa.—He found man in Chaldæa (map), at town called Ur of the Chaldees (map). Give meaning of last phrase. Read xi. 31. The man was Abram.

The Call to Abram.—Terah seems to have been called first. He left Ur, went long way up river valley to Haran (map), and died there. Then call came to Abram. Read xii. 1. Abram responded to call. He had to give up much. What? But all whom God calls must give up something.

Hope in the Call.—Ask where message of Hope comes in. ("In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.") Explain these words. Show that they are a promise of Jesus Christ. He was to be of seed of Abram: He should save His people from their sins.

Refer to Hope promised later by Isaiah (Golden Age and King).

A Fresh Sign of Hope.—God was now really promising another sign of Hope. (The Cross.) How do we show it is a sign of Hope? (Put it on foreheads of those baptized and on graves of dead.) Why? (We hope babies will become good soldiers of Christ: we hope dead will reign with Christ.)

APPLICATION

Hope through Lent.—Refer to coming season. God gives fresh Hope through this season. How is it a season of Hope? (If we use it well, we shall become better servants of Christ.)

Speak of picture St. George and Dragon. Tell children to think of it this Lent. It teaches Hope. How? Dragon stands for evil under which world suffers. St. George represents soldiers of Christ fighting with wrong and conquering. So it teaches lesson of Hope to all willing to fight under Christ's banner.

To keep Lent well, we must be like St. George. Noah, Abram, Isaiah, were St. Georges.

When discouraged in struggle, two signs should fill us afresh with Hope—the Rainbow, the Cross.

How well we should fight for the Great Father who so continually sends us Hope.

Hymn 91 (A. and M.).

Work for Week: To make coloured drawings of the two signs of Hope. The Cross may be copied from the Cross in the Church.

Lesson XIII. FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

The Founder of a Race (Genesis xii.–xiv.)

Aim. 1. *To show the helpfulness of the story of Abraham during Lent.* 2. *To impress the leading thought: "Our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey Thy godly motions." Collect for First Sunday in Lent.*

PREPARATION

(a) *The Lenten Season.*—Question children about the meaning of Lent, why it is kept as a season of self-denial, and the use of its observance in modern days. (b) *The Collect* for the day will be read and considered. (c) *A question* to answer at end of the lesson will be put on the blackboard (see Blackboard Summary).

PRESENTATION

I. The Choice of Abraham by God.—Teacher will show picture of Abraham leaving home, and will ask class to describe his appearance—what he is doing—the purpose of the mules in the background. This will lead up to the fact that Abraham is ready for a journey. Teacher will now tell who Abraham was (a Hebrew descended from Shem), how God chose him to be the founder of His chosen race. A description will be given of his beautiful wife Sarah, and his nephew Lot, who was to be closely connected with him. Gen. xii. 1–6 will be read with the class.

II. A Description of Abraham's Travels and his adventures will next be taken. Teacher should have a *sketch map* showing the position of Haran in Mesopotamia, Canaan, Egypt, Sodom, Hebron.

The special incidents taken will be—

(a) *The Disagreement* between Abraham and Lot, and their separation.

The picture "Lot's Choice" will be shown. Abraham's unselfishness in allowing Lot the first choice will be dwelt upon.

(b) *The Rescue* of Lot by Abraham, when the former was taken prisoner in war. This will illustrate Abraham's desire to help and his devotion to his relatives.

(c) *Altar-building.*—The fact that at Bethel (xii. 8), and at Hebron (xiii. 4 and 18), Abraham built an altar to the Lord will be pointed out, with reference to the Bible text.

III. The Covenant.—Again reference will be made to God's covenant with Abraham, and the children will be asked to repeat that part of the Benedictus which refers to it.

APPLICATION

I. Teacher will again refer to Abraham's building of altars, and will ask what lesson can be learnt from this. We can help to build Churches. We can show the spirit of worship by attending service at the altar of God. Particularly during Lent we should be regular in our worship.

II. The question, "What useful Lenten lesson can we learn from the story of Abraham?" will now be considered. The answer will be summed up as follows:

Abraham showed (a) *Obedience* to God's command and *Trust* in God, when he left his country and kindred. If our own people stand in the way of God's command, we must obey and trust God first.

(b) *Endurance.*—A wandering life needs great endurance, with its hardships of wind and weather, of unknown people and lands. God often tests our power of endurance by sending hardships.

(c) *Unselfishness.*—He allowed Lot to choose where he should go when they separated.

(d) *Helpfulness.*—He went at once to Lot's assistance.

(e) *Self-denial.*—It must have meant much striving against his own wishes on the part of Abraham to change his life in this way.

Thus we may see that Abraham was "subdued to the Spirit," and he was obeying the Lord's "godly motions in righteousness and true holiness."

All these qualities are especially necessary to us in Lent: we often feel what is our duty, but are rebellious instead of obedient, weak instead of enduring, selfish and self-seeking instead of seeking to help others. These are the Lenten lessons we should learn from Abraham.

Blackboard: The season of Lent. A commemoration. A period of spiritual help. Abraham, the Founder of a Race. What do we learn in the Story of Abraham which is of help to us at the beginning of Lent?

Expression Work: 1. Let children copy the map. 2. They may write out at home an answer to the question on the blackboard.

Teacher's Preparation: Gen. xii.–xiv.

Suggested Hymn: 85 (A. and M.).

N.B.—All pictures referred to in this and the five succeeding lessons are to be found in Nelson's series of Old Testament pictures.

Lesson XIV. SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Love's Offering (Genesis xxii.)

Aim. 1. *To show the lengths to which true love will go, and that no human love can be greater than that of God for His children.* 2. *To impress the leading thought: Love spends itself in sacrifice.*

PREPARATION

I. *Sacrifice.*—Begin with short talk on sacrifice, as it appears in the Old Testament. Explain that in olden days it was the custom to worship and praise God by offering sacrifice (*e.g.* after the flood Noah offered sacrifice, Gen. viii. 20–21), and give short description of kind of sacrifice men used to offer.

II. *Description of Picture.*—Show picture of Abraham offering Isaac, and let children describe it.

PRESENTATION

I. Necessity for Testing Abraham.—Reference will be made to the last lesson on Abraham. Remind children how he had shown faith and love towards God. But now God wished to test him further, for it was necessary that the founder of the chosen race should be a man firm and trustworthy in every respect.

II. Description of the Text.—Gen. xxii. 1–14 will next be read with class. Teacher should lead children to consider—

(a) *The Severe Nature of the Test*, the offering of an only son, the only hope Abraham had of carrying on his family. God had promised him that his seed should become a great nation, yet this command seemed to contradict the promise.

(b) *The Feelings of the Father* as he led Isaac up the mountain side (refer to picture—Isaac's question and his father's answer).

(c) *The Depth of Faith and Love*, the self-denial, and the obedient spirit which led Abraham to set aside all the reluctance of a parent and to carry out God's command. The greater love sacrificed the lesser, for "Love spends itself in sacrifice."

(d) *The Relief and Joy* that must have filled Abraham's heart when he was bidden to stay his hand, and the gladness he must have felt because he had not refused the sacrifice.

III. The Blessing.—Verses 15–19 will then be read with class.

(a) *The Promise.*—Teachers will question class about the occasion

on which this promise was first made to Abraham. Attention will be drawn to the repetition of the promise of *blessing*:

"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

"In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed."

And the question will be asked, "What particular blessing was to come from the descendants of Abraham?"

(b) *The Encouragement.*—Children will then be led to see what an encouragement this incident must have been to Abraham. Instead of contradicting His promise, God was strengthening it.

APPLICATION

I. *Lenten Lesson.*—This story teaches the greatest Lenten lesson of all. There can be no greater sacrifice than that of an only son. Teacher will here refer to the Great Sacrifice of God the Father in giving His only Son our Saviour to the world as a sacrifice for our sins.

"Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. v. 7). Ask why God made this sacrifice. The answer is, "Because He loves us, and Love spends itself in sacrifice." "God so loved the world."

Ask the question, "Shall we grudge any sacrifice that we can make when we have before us the lesson of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, and when we think of the Greatest Sacrifice of all that was made for us?"

II. *Change in Idea of Sacrifice.*—Teacher will end the lesson by explaining how, as men became more enlightened, they realised that burnt offerings were no longer wished for by God. In many places in the Bible we can learn what sacrifice God really wishes from those who love Him. "To obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. xv. 22). "To do justice is more acceptable than sacrifice" (Prov. xxi. 3). "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Rom. xii. 1). "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise" (Heb. xiii. 15), and if we love Him we shall willingly offer Him the sacrifice He longs for, for "Love spends itself in sacrifice."

Blackboard: Love's Offering. Love spends itself in sacrifice. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son."

Expression Work: Class may write out an account of the change in the idea of sacrifice.

Teacher's Preparation: Gen. xxii.

Suggested Hymn: 173 (A. and M.).

Lesson XV. THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

"Lo, I am with you Alway" (Genesis xxv.–xxxii.)

Aim. 1. *To show that God's choice is better than man's.* 2. *To impress the thought:* "*Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.*"—1 Sam. xvi. 7.

PREPARATION

Reference to Isaac. Explain that when he was grown, he and his wife Rebekah had twin sons. God made choice between them of the worthier man to carry on the race of Abraham. Refer to title: tell that words of Christ to His disciples summed up God's promise, and that this may be seen in story of Jacob and Esau.

PRESENTATION

The facts will be known. Main part of lesson is to find out what warning or comfort God gives us through the story.

I. The Prophecy.—Show how God answered prayer, and foresaw which son should be worthier: "the elder shall serve the younger."

II. Youth of Jacob and Esau.

(a) *Meaning of Names.*—Esau, hairy. Jacob, supplanter.

(b) *Contrast* between father's favourite and mother's boy. Ask who would be most popular to-day. Remind class that popularity stands for very little; that though "man looketh on the outward appearance, God looketh on the heart."

(c) *The Birthright.*—Explain as follows:

1. Modern custom of inheritance by eldest son, *e.g.* Prince of Wales, &c.

2. Special duties and privileges of firstborn in time of Isaac: he acted as priest for the family; had authority over brethren. The firstborn of Isaac had also a special privilege in the promise of God to Abraham. Refer to covenant.

3. Value of such a birthright: make children see that Esau gratified his bodily need at expense of his spiritual privilege, that he lacked a quality necessary to a leader—self-control. Show that God allowed Jacob to test Esau, in order to make Isaac see that Esau was not fit to be the heir. Isaac was looking on the outward appearance, but God looked on the heart.

III. The Quarrel.

(a) *Jacob's Obtaining the Blessing.*—Show how God led Isaac to fulfil his will. Show picture of Isaac blessing Jacob.

If children raise question of deceit of Jacob and Rebekah, teacher will explain that Jacob was punished by being a wanderer from home owing to Esau's desire for revenge, and by the wickedness of his own sons afterwards. But God allowed good to come of his deceit, for he

prevented Isaac from disobeying the will of God. Jacob began badly, but he continually improved.

(b) *Esau's Anger.*—Describe this: read words of Esau's blessing. Describe plot, and Jacob's departure with renewed blessing from Isaac.

IV. JACOB'S TRAVELS.—Show how God was with Jacob, the chosen heir, while he was working out his punishment, and proving himself worthy of the position.

(a) *Jacob's Ladder.*—Effect of vision—encouragement and increased faith in God, who was with him.

(b) *In Exile.*—He was still being tested, but God was with him, as shown by his perseverance in spite of many difficulties.

(c) *His Return.*—Signs shown of God's continued favour.

1. The vision of angels: compare with former vision.

2. The wrestling with the angel: Explain purpose of incident. (i) Jacob obtained a blessing for his perseverance. (ii) Very often a blessing comes through apparent harm. Jacob won blessing, but was hurt in struggle. His lameness would always remind him of incident.

3. *The Change of Name* marked definite change in Jacob's character. He was no longer a supplanter. Jews henceforth are "children of Israel."

4. *Reconciliation.* Show picture.

APPLICATION

This should be worked out side by side with narrative.

I. *Question.*—"Why was Esau disinherited?" He lacked self-control: saw no value in spiritual blessings conferred by his birthright: was disobedient in his marriage: planned to kill his brother in revenge, instead of making himself worthier to receive greater blessing.

II. *Lenten Lesson.*

(*a*) Self-indulgence may lead into sin—let us practise self-denial, especially with regard to bodily appetite during Lent.

(*b*) No popularity compensates for loss of God's blessing; we lose our own self-respect if we forget "man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart."

(*c*) Patience and perseverance, with trust in God, will help us, as Jacob was helped.

III. *Forgiveness and Blessing* were accorded to Jacob. As God was with him in his penitence, so will He be with us. Read Collect for Fourth Sunday in Lent, showing its suitability.

Blackboard: 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

Expression Work: Let children find and write texts dealing with forgiveness and reconciliation.

Teacher's Preparation: Gen. xxv., xxvii., xxviii., and xxxii.

Suggested Hymn: 628 (A. and M.).

Lesson XVI. FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

The Best Beloved of his Father (Genesis xxxvii.)

Aim. 1. *To arouse fresh interest in Joseph's adventures, and to continue this throughout the two following lessons also.* 2. *To point out, wherever possible, the connection between Old Testament and New.* 3. *To impress the leading thought:* "*He was despised, and we esteemed him not.*"—Isa. liii. 3.

PREPARATION

Prepare for story of jealousy. Remind class of quarrel between brothers in last lesson, how Esau's jealousy and anger and Jacob's treachery led to evil.

PRESENTATION

I. *Family of Jacob.*—Describe Jacob's sons, dwelling upon Jacob's love for Joseph and the present of the coat of many colours, resulting in jealousy of elder brothers. Question about result of favouritism upon Jacob's character and upon Joseph's.

II. *Joseph the Dreamer.*

Proceed as follows—

(*a*) Dream of the Sheaves
(*b*) Dream of the sun, moon, and stars } Read from Bible verses 5–11.

Question about the interpretation the brothers and father of Joseph would put upon the dreams. Refer to verses 8 and 10. Show picture of Joseph telling his dreams; children will notice his innocent looks, his coat, the discontented and scoffing faces of the brothers. "He was despised and they esteemed him not."

III. *The Obedient Son.*—Question children on their knowledge of an eastern shepherd's life—the long periods away from home as he led his flocks from pasture to pasture, often far distant from his fellows. Tell story of Joseph's adventures in following sections:

(a) *Command of Jacob.*—Point out Joseph's willing spirit and desire to be useful.

(b) *Joseph's Search:* his approach; brothers' scornful words when they saw him, "Behold, this dreamer cometh!"—their plot: still they "esteemed him not."

(c) *Reuben's Interference:* how his brothers were more wily; his grief and fear at thought of meeting his father. Show picture of Joseph being sold.

(d) *Joseph's entrance* into Potiphar's house.

(e) *Return of brothers* alone; their deception; Israel's grief.

IV. Character of Joseph, Reuben, Judah.

(a) *Joseph*, innocent and trusting, for he concealed nothing, but told his dreams openly; not proud or uplifted, for he did not try to set himself up on account of his dreams; willing and affectionate, eager to execute his father's will. Question on these points.

Children may wonder why God allowed this good boy to be treated thus; explain that they will learn the reason next lesson. Ask question, "Was Joseph spoilt by his father's great love?"

(b) *Reuben*, fond of Joseph, but not strong enough in character to stand out against his brothers, and to forbid them to carry out their wicked scheme. He tried to outwit them, but they were more wily and took advantage of his absence. He was not strong enough, in spite of his grief, to confess to his father, but consented to deception. Try to make class see that Reuben was a moral coward.

(c) *Judah*, the commercial spirit; willing to sell his brother for profit.

APPLICATION

I. *Joseph—type of our Lord.*

(a) *Both were scorned and rejected* by those who should have cherished them. The words of Isaiah, "He was despised and rejected," might describe Joseph as well as Jesus.

(b) *Joseph was sold* for twenty pieces of silver; Our Lord betrayed for thirty pieces.

(c) *Both saved those* by whom they were rejected (seen in next lesson).

II. *Judah—somewhat typical of Judas.*

Both wished to make a profit.

III. *Reuben—type of a weak believer.*

Remind class of S. Peter's denial, and of the young man who fled from Jesus' side, leaving his cloak when the young men laid hands on him; compare their weakness with Reuben's.

IV. *How do we treat those whom others Persecute.*—Are we like Reuben or Judah? Or do we, like true Christians, brave Englishmen, help those that are oppressed "manfully to fight under Christ's banner against sin, the world, and the Devil"?

Blackboard: 1. Leading thought. 2. Headings of Application.

Expression Work: Some thoughts on the character of Joseph.

Teacher's Preparation: Gen. xxxvii.

Lesson XVII. FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

The Exile (Gen. xxxix.–xli.)

Aim. *To impress the leading thought: "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is."*

PREPARATION

1. *Connection* with last lesson by questioning.
2. *Repetition* of last leading thought.

PRESENTATION

I. Signs of the Times.

(a) *The King's State.*—Simple word picture of Egyptian monarch, Pharaoh, with wealth expended upon costly and bright robes, gold and silver ornaments, chariots and horsemen, fine palaces, servants and attendants: care of monarch for protection of cities, for irrigation of country by canals: pride in fine monuments and tombs (mention Pyramids). Thus form background for life of Joseph in Egypt, and prepare class for mention of butler, baker, captain of the guard.

(b) *The People.*—God's way in olden times of sending men knowledge of His will in dreams; power given to some of telling the meaning. Dreams and their interpretation were considered signs indicating God's will. Refer to Joseph's dreams. No one told him the meaning, because he was too young and inexperienced to understand, but his family understood. Explain that later God gave Joseph the special power of interpreting dreams. As the world progresses, God causes man's power and skill to express itself differently. Some of the signs of modern times are newspapers, aeroplanes, telephone, wireless telegraphy; all these show God's power over the minds of men as much as the interpretation of dreams in olden days. God works silently in men's hearts and minds to-day, rather than by direct signs and visions, but results are just as visible.

II. Joseph in Potiphar's House.

(a) *His Master's Trust.*—Question on reasons. Quote xxxix. 2, 3, 4. "The Lord was with him."

(b) *Fall from Power.*

III. Joseph in Prison.

(a) *His Bearing.*—xxxix. 21. For the second time Joseph made a favourable impression upon a stranger. What caused this attractiveness? The Spirit of the Lord was in him, showing in behaviour, speech, looks; resulting in position of authority over other prisoners. Ask why God was with him.

(b) *His companions' dreams.*—1. The butler's dream. 2. The baker's dream.

(c) *Interpretation and fulfilment.*—Rapidly tell narrative of these.

IV. Joseph and Pharaoh.

(a) *Pharaoh's Dreams.*—Tell narrative calling attention to similarity, asking children to conjecture purpose (*i.e.* to arrest Pharaoh's attention and cause disturbance of mind).

(b) *Butler's remembrance of Joseph.*—Quote Eccles. xi. 1. Let children apply text to Joseph and butler.

(c) *Joseph's Interpretation and Good Advice.*—Let children suggest this.

V. Joseph's Return to Prosperity.

(a) *Pharaoh's Estimate of Joseph.*—xli. 38.

(b) *Reward.*—Read verses 39–43, noticing special marks of honour. Show picture of Joseph as Ruler; draw attention to his splendid appearance, trappings of horse and chariot, guard; bowing populace.

(c) *Result of Joseph's Management.*—Tell class in own words, quoting last verse.

APPLICATION

I. Joseph: Type of Jesus Christ.—Class will make following comparisons:

(a) *False Accusation.* Jesus: falsely accused of blasphemy, imprisoned, crucified. Joseph: imprisoned through lies.

(b) *Imprisonment before Reward.*—Jesus: three days in abode of departed spirits before resurrection. "He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead and ascended into Heaven." Joseph: three years in prison before his rise to power under Pharaoh.

(c) *Exaltation.*—Jesus Christ "sitteth on the right hand of God in the glory of the Father." He received full power in the kingdom of God in heaven and earth, and receives the worship and honour of His subjects; Joseph was given full power in the kingdom of Egypt, and to him the people bowed and did honour.

II. Work of the Spirit.—In exile, even in the depths of degradation Joseph found friends and prospered. All were struck with certain qualities—

(a) *He Inspired Confidence.*—Refer to Potiphar, the keeper, Pharaoh.

(b) *He possessed Wisdom and Discretion.*—Refer to xli. 39. Ask what was the source of these qualities? Refer to xxxix. 2, 21, 23. Pharaoh sums up reason for Joseph's success in xli. 38.

N.B.—In every case Joseph gives the honour to God.

Blackboard: Headings of Application.

Expression Work: An account of the part played by dreams in Joseph's life.

Lesson XVIII. SIXTH SUNDAY IN LENT

The Deliverer (Gen. xlii–xlvii.)

Aim. *To impress the leading thought:* "*The stone which the builders refused has become the head of the corner.*"—Ps. cxviii. 22.

PREPARATION

I. *Repetition* of leading thought of two previous lessons.

II. *Blackboard.*

(a) *Leading thought* of this lesson.

(b) *Question* to be answered later:

"Can we connect the words, 'He was despised and we esteemed Him not,' and the leading thought with Joseph and our Lord?"

PRESENTATION

I. The Visits of Joseph's Brethren to Egypt.

Children will know these stories fairly well, and teacher will encourage them to tell the stories in their own words, helped by leading questions if their memory fails them. The matter will be taken in the following sections—

(*a*) First visit without Benjamin.

(*b*) Second visit with Benjamin.

(*c*) The reconciliation.

(*d*) The migration of Jacob into Egypt.

II. Lessons to be Learnt.

(a) *Memory of Sin Committed is Grievous.*—Teacher will refer to xlii. 21–22.

(b) *To return Good for Evil is Blessed.*—Teacher and class will discuss Joseph's treatment of his brethren.

(c) *Forgiveness is the mark of the Man of God.*—"He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," wrote S. John in his Epistle, of Our Lord. The brothers' thoughts of Joseph must have been similar.

III. God's Purpose.

(a) *Joseph's Words* to his brethren show why God allowed a wrong to be done to an innocent boy. "Now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life . . . so now it was not you that sent me, but God: and He hath made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."

Teacher will question children as to what would have happened

to the family in the time of famine if Joseph had not gone into Egypt, and will remind them that—

"God works in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

(b) "*The Stone which the Builders refused has become the Head of the Corner.*"—Children will now be able to apply this to Joseph. He who was despised and rejected is now the most important.

(c) *Fulfilment of Joseph's Dreams.*—Teacher will refer to the dreams, and show how God's purpose, shown in them, has been fulfilled. The picture of the brethren bowing before Joseph will here be shown.

IV. The Renewal of God's Promise.—Jacob had passed through great tribulation as punishment for his sins, but God had not deserted him, and renewed His promise in a dream as he was on his way to his long-lost son. Teacher will quote xlvi. 3–4.

APPLICATION

I. Joseph as a Type of Jesus Christ.—Teacher will refer to the conclusion of the last lesson, and will add the following points—

(a) *The Mediator.*—Just as Pharaoh, at Joseph's request, offered a home and comfort to the family, so God, through "the mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord," welcomes us to our heavenly home, and brings us through all dangers and troubles, if we repent of our sins, as did Israel and his sons.

(b) *The Deliverer.*—Just as Joseph proved the deliverer of his family, so Jesus Christ is the deliverer of the great family of mankind who own God as the Father, for He died that we might have everlasting life.

"He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us Good,
That we might go at last to Heaven,
Saved by His precious Blood."

II. Good Friday Lesson.

Teacher will conclude by referring to Good Friday and its solemn lessons, and will lead children to see that those who mourn for the death of Jesus Christ at the hands of His enemies should not be hopeless or dismal, but should look forward with joy to the glad Eastertide of His Resurrection, and should remember that He who was "despised and rejected of men" has become "the head of the corner."

Expression Work: Write at home an Essay on "The Character of Joseph."

Lesson XIX. EASTER DAY

Two Great Deliverances (Exod. xii.; St. Matt xxviii. 1–10.)

Aims. 1. *To lead the children to know something of the importance and joyfulness of the Easter festival.* 2. *To show the close connection between the Old and New Testaments, and so lead the children to see how God is working His purpose out.*

PREPARATION

Refer to the time of slavery and its abolition. (Children will probably have heard of this in their lessons in the day school.) Dwell upon the feeling of those who had been released—great thankfulness, and say that we are going to hear in our lesson to-day of times of great thankfulness. Show the map and point out where the children of Israel were still working as slaves under King Pharaoh.

PRESENTATION

1. The Conditions under which the Children of Israel were working.—Give a word picture of the hardships which they had undergone, and of King Pharaoh's tyranny. Ask the children how the Israelites knew that God was taking care of them and thinking of them although they were still in the land of Egypt. Make brief reference to the plagues: Who were affected by them?

2. The Institution of the Passover—God's method of Deliverance by the hands of Moses and Aaron.

1. *What the People were to do—*

(*a*) To take a lamb without blemish.

(*b*) To kill it on the 14th day of the month.

(*c*) To strike the door-posts with the blood.

(*d*) To eat the flesh.

(*e*) To be prepared for a journey.

2. *What God would do.*

(*a*) He would pass through the land of Egypt that night, and slay all the first-born of Egypt, both man and beast.

(*b*) He would "pass over" the houses marked with blood—"The Lord shall deliver you."

Refer to any great work for God, *e.g.* missionary work, and show that God and man are working together. "God is working His purpose out" with the help of man. Apply this idea to the deliverance from Egypt. Refer to the words, "The Lord shall deliver you," but also impress the idea that the people must do their part.

Read from the Bible Ex. xii. 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, and from this lead the children to sum up the people's part. Expand the ideas in verse 3 by

giving the ideas contained in verse 5. Read verses 12, 13, and so lead the children to realise God's part.

Show the picture of the Institution of the Passover, and discuss it with the children.

Ask why the command was given to strike the door-posts with the blood, and conclude this part of the lesson by reading verses 26 and 27. Refer to the passages—"Ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord, throughout your generations." and "The Lord shall deliver you."

3. The great Sacrifice upon the Cross and the great Deliverance, "*Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast.*"—Quote Browning's words, "The world as God has made it all is beauty," and also the words of the Catechism, "This wicked world." Discuss the two with the children, leading them to see that man has in many ways marred God's beautiful world. Get examples from the children's own experience of wickedness in the world, and compare with the bondage of the children of Israel.

Cf. the killing of the Lamb without blemish with the sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross.

Cf. the deliverance from bondage and the promise of the land of Canaan with the text, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast," and with the words of the Collect for Easter Even, "That through the grave and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection."

Describe Blair Leighton's "To the Unknown Land," where the sorrow and joy of death are so beautifully pourtrayed, but where the joy predominates; *or* briefly tell the story of "The Twins" given in Mrs. Alexander's poem "The Dead."

APPLICATION

Have the text, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast," written on a blackboard. Discuss their meaning, and quote Mrs. Alexander's words:

"For brighter Easter yet shall be to rend the stone, to shake the sod,
When face to face we look on Thee, O Saviour Slain! O risen God!"

Expression Work: Let the children copy into their note-books the text on the blackboard. Tell them to read carefully during the week the Anthem and the Epistle for Easter Day in their Prayer Books, and to add texts which they think suitable.

Material Required: (1) A sketch map showing Egypt and the Promised Land. (2) A large picture (Nelson's) showing the institution of the Passover.

Hymn: "Jesus Christ is risen to-day."

Lesson XX. FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Crossing the Red Sea (Exod. xiv., xv.)

Aim. *To impress the thought, "The Lord shall fight for you," and the duty of thanksgiving.*

PREPARATION

Refer to the sketch map and point out the land of Goshen. Refer to the great deliverance effected in the last lesson. Show on the map the journey already taken by the children of Israel, marking it by means of a coloured line. Read Ex. xiii. 21, and so bring out the idea of God's care.

PRESENTATION

(1) *The Encampment at Pihahiroth.*—Mark Pihahiroth on the map, and give a graphic word picture of the putting up of the tents, the settling down for the night, Moses and Aaron supervising and advising. Dwell upon the people's feelings of thankfulness that they had left the land of bondage.

(2) *The Scene in the Palace of King Pharaoh.*—Quote the words of Pharaoh to Moses after the slaying of the first-born, Ex. xii. 31 and 32. Read Ex. xiv. 5, and ask the children to suggest what Pharaoh might do. Lead them, by means of descriptive language, to realise the excitement of preparation in Pharaoh's household. Ask why Pharaoh was sorry he had let the people go.

(3) *The fear and discontent shown by the Children of Israel.*—Let the children suggest what the people would do when they saw the Egyptians approaching. Show by reference to the map that escape seemed impossible—the sea was in front of them, the mountains on the south and west, and the Egyptians behind. Show a sketch of an Egyptian chariot,[1] and read chap. xiv. 10 and 11. Ask the children whether they think the people were right to grumble at Moses. Discuss this with them.

(4) *Moses' answer to the People.*—Describe as graphically as possible how Moses stood up before the whole congregation. Give the words

[1] Kitto's *Daily Bible Illustrations* (Moses and the Judges), p. 91.

of the leading thought "The Lord shall fight for you." Show a picture of Moses (Nelson's), and lead them to realise the difficulty of his position.

(5) *God's answer to Moses.*—Remind the children of the last lesson when they saw that God and man were working together for the deliverance of the Israelites. Impress this idea again by reference to God's words :—

(*a*) Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward.
(*b*) But lift thou up thy rod, &c. Ex. xiv. 15 and 16.

(6) *The Deliverance by the Hand of God.*—Describe the scene of the deliverance—

(*a*) The blowing of the strong east wind.
(*b*) The passing over of the Israelites on dry ground.
(*c*) The destruction of the Egyptians.

Let the children find Ps. xxxiv. 17 and 16, and read the words, "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles."

"The face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

APPLICATION

Remind the children of the great Easter festival, a season of great thanksgiving. Ask for one way of showing our thankfulness (by our hymns and songs of praise). Let them mention other times in the Church's year when we sing "Songs of thankfulness and praise." Lead them to suggest what Moses and the children of Israel might do, and read a few verses of Moses' song of Thanksgiving. (Exodus xv.)

Expression Work :

1. Writing in the note-books a part of the great song of thanksgiving; or,
2. Making a copy of the sketch of the Egyptian chariot; or,
3. Making a sketch map and filling in the journeyings as far as the crossing of the Red Sea.

Suggest that a model of a chariot in cardboard or wood might be made during the week, or that the children might find six psalms which are thanksgiving psalms.

Material Required : (1) Sketch map used in previous lesson. (2) Sketch of Egyptian chariot.

Hymn : "Come, Christian Children," 275 in *Children's Hymn Book.*

Teacher's Preparation : Ex. xiv. and xv.

Lesson XXI. SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

The Striking of the Rock at Meribah (Numbers xx. 1–13)

Aim. *To lead the children to realise more fully some of the words in the Lord's Prayer. "Give us this day our daily bread . . . for Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory."*

PREPARATION

Tell children that since the crossing of the Red Sea the children of Israel had been journeying for over thirty years. Illustrate by reference to their own age—about three times as long as they have lived. Lead them to realise how some of the old people would have died, the middle-aged would now be old, and those who started as little babies would be fathers and mothers with little children of their own. Mark with coloured chalk the journey taken so far. Refer briefly to some of the difficulties they had encountered so far—*e.g.* the bitter waters, lack of food, and how God had cared for them the whole time.

PRESENTATION

(1) *The People grumble because they have no Water.*—From the map lead the children to see the kind of country where they were encamped. Contrast their difficulty with the ease with which we get water to-day. *Cf.* with travellers in some parts of Australia, and so lead children to realise the great difficulty they were in. Read Num. xx. 3, 4, 5, and lead children to discuss the behaviour of the children of Israel. Refer to their difficulty in the previous lesson, and how God, through Moses, had delivered them.

(2) *Moses and Aaron inquire of the Lord.*—Let the children suggest what Moses and Aaron would do. *Cf.* with the Church's custom to-day. Let the children turn in their Prayer Books to the "Prayers and Thanksgivings upon special occasions." Give a word picture of the visit of Moses and Aaron to the Tabernacle, and show diagram or model.

(3) *God's Command to Moses to speak to the Rock.*—Read Num. xx. 8 very impressively from the Bible.

(4) *How Moses marred an otherwise Beautiful Life.*—Describe the scene at the rock, the congregation standing round, Moses and Aaron near the rock—the striking of the rock: the words spoken: the result. Picture the people and the cattle quenching their thirst. Quote again

the words, "Hear now, ye rebels . . . rock," and ask the children whether Moses was right in saying this or not. Impress again the idea that God was working by means of His servant Moses, and lead them to see that Moses and Aaron were taking unto themselves the honour due to God. Illustrate by reference to recovery from a serious illness; the doctor and the nurse have been the means, but the patient gives thanks to God. Quote the text, "The King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to whom be honour and power everlasting." Refer to the petition in the Lord's prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," and the conclusion, "For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory."

(5) *How Moses Suffered.*—Read Num. xx. 12. Illustrate Moses' great disappointment by reference to a clergyman who has been keenly interested in the building of a new Church, and when it is nearly finished, he knows he will die before it is consecrated. *Cf.* with Moses having led the children of Israel for so many years. Refer to the great disappointment, and ask the children what would be the bitterest part to a man like Moses, and so lead them to see that the sin was the greatest sorrow.

APPLICATION

Let the children find the Epistle for the Second Sunday after Easter. Draw attention specially to the words, "Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."

Ask to whom these words refer, and lead children to see that the words may also be applied to Moses. Ask for examples of occasions when Moses so committed himself to God and gave to God the glory. How Moses must have regretted his one great failure to ascribe to God "the kingdom, the power, and the glory."

Expression Work:

1. Entering in note-books the words, "The King of Kings and Lord of Lords . . . to whom be honour and power everlasting."
2. Filling in map begun in previous lesson.
3. Writing during the week their thoughts with regard to Moses' suffering.

Material Required:

(1) Map used during previous lesson.
(2) Diagram or model of tabernacle.

Teacher's Preparation: Num. xx. 1–13; Psalm xcvi. 1–8.

Lesson XXII. THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

A Great Temptation (Numbers xxii. 1–21)

Aims. (1) *To bring before the children the best in Balaam's character.* (2) *To lead them to a fuller understanding of the petition, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."*

PREPARATION

Let children find in their Prayer Books the epistle for Monday in Easter week. Draw attention to the words, "In every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." Show on the map the place the children of Israel had now reached, and briefly relate their difficulties with the King of Edom, and with Sihon, King of the Amorites. Show their position in the plains of Moab, and ask how the King of Moab would probably feel towards the people of Israel. Say that in this lesson we shall hear of a man who feared God and was accepted with Him to work righteousness for the children of Israel.

PRESENTATION

(1) *Balak's first Message to Balaam: "Come curse me this people."* —Let the children suggest Balak's plan of action, and discuss with them each suggestion.

Tell of the great Eastern wise man (Balaam) who lived near the river Euphrates. Point out the district on the map, and lead children to suggest what Balak actually did. Give some idea of the distance the messengers had to travel (about 500 miles). Compare with some distance known to the children—*e.g.* the distance from the north to the south of England—and from the map lead them to suggest the kind of country they would pass through. (The teacher should be prepared to supplement and enrich what the children give, so that they get a good idea of the journey of the messengers with their presents.) (See *By Desert Ways to Bagdad.* Wilkins.)

(2) *Balaam's reply: "The Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you."*—Let the suggestions come from the children about Balaam's plan of action. They will in all probability suggest asking God what he was to do. Read Num. xxii. 8–13, and ask whether it was easy or difficult for Balaam to send this answer. Refer to the words, "he that feareth Him."

(3) *The return to Balak and his second Message.*—Question children as to Balak's thoughts during this time and so lead them to realise his anxiety and bitter disappointment when the messengers returned.

Let children suggest what Balak might think was the reason for Balaam's refusal to come and curse the people, and from this lead them to see that Balak might send again with greater promises than before. Read Num. xxii. 15, 16, 17.

(4) *The result of the Message.*—"And Balaam rose up in the morning and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab."

Many suggestions can come from the children—*e.g.* What Balaam would say when the messengers arrived; what he might do. Read verse 18. Discuss with the children whether they think Balaam was right to ask God a second time. Tell them God's answer, laying special stress on the words: "The word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do." Quote again the words of the Epistle.

APPLICATION

Ask the children what Balaam's great temptation had been, and from whence he had got help. Refer to the petition in the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us . . . evil." Discuss with the children one or two of their own temptations, and how they can get help to overcome these. Tell the story of Nauhaught the Deacon (Whittier), the man who overcame a great temptation through God's help.

Expression Work: This might take the form of group-work[1]—the drawing and cutting out of large letters to form the petition, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." The letters would be cut from light-coloured paper and fastened to a dark background.

Hymn: "Soldiers of Christ, arise," 228 *Children's Hymn Book.*

Material Required: (1) Sketch map used in previous lessons. (2) Sketch map of district from which Balaam came.

Teacher's Preparation: Num. xxii. 1–21.

[1] *Group-work. Portions of the work to be done are allotted to different parts or members of the class. When the work is completed the best pieces are selected and put together to form a whole.*

Lesson XXIII. FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

A Memorable Journey and a Great Sacrifice
(NUMBERS xxii. 22–41; xxiii.)

Aim. *To impress the thought,* "*All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do.*"

PREPARATION

Refer again to the words of the text used in the last lesson, "In every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." Ask the children how God had already accepted Balaam to carry out His purpose.

Quote the words of the leading thought, and tell the children that they are to find out how God spoke to Balaam, and how he carried out God's command.

PRESENTATION

(1) *The events of the Journey.*—(*a*) The appearance of the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with a drawn sword. (*b*) The message conveyed to Balaam through the ass.

Picture the setting out of Balaam with the messengers of Balak. Tell graphically the story of God's intervention, and discuss with the children how God allowed the ass to speak to Balaam. This incident often raises a laugh if not very carefully dealt with, and the children are old enough to understand that although the ass may not have "spoken" as we speak, yet it "spoke" in such a way that God's message was conveyed to Balaam. Refer to S. Paul's conversion, and Browning's words in connection with it—

> "Where one heard noise and one saw flame,
> I only knew He named my name,"

and so lead the children to see that God spoke to S. Paul in some special way.

Discuss with the children why God was angry with Balaam when He had given him leave to go. Quote Balaam's words to the Angel, Num. xxii. 34, and God's answer, verse 35.

(2) *The reception by Balak.*—Picture the scene of Eastern splendour when Balak "went out to meet him to a city of Moab." Let the children suggest what Balak would say, and also Balaam's answer, then quote Num. xxii. 37 and 38.

(3) *The building of the Altars and the threefold Blessing of Israel.*

(a) *Balak takes Balaam to the High Places of Baal.*—Show on map and describe the scene which lay before them: the whole encampment of Israel. Read Balaam's request, "Build me here seven altars." By reference to the previous lesson let children say what Balak was hoping that Balaam would do. Let children suggest Balaam's plan of action, and give the result. Quote the words of the leading thought.

(b) *The Second and Third Sacrifices.*—Here the children can supply most of the matter, as the events are almost a repetition of those which took place at the first sacrifice. Quote Num. xxiv. 10, 11, 12, 13, and thus lead children to realise how much courage had been necessary in order to carry out God's will.

APPLICATION

Let the children turn in their Prayer Books to the Collect for the day. Read it slowly and clearly. Apply to Balaam, whose "unruly will" was overcome by God's power, and who did the thing which God commanded.

If we, like Balaam, are ever placed in difficult circumstances, what must be our watchword? "All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do."

Expression Work: 1. Writing in the note-books the leading thought, and the Collect for the day. 2. During the week writing an answer to the question, "How did God use Balaam in working out His purpose."

Hymn: "A Charge to keep I have," 231 in *Children's Hymn Book.*

Teacher's Preparation: Num. xxii. 22–41; xxiii; xxiv. 10–13.

Lesson XXIV. FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

The Man whose Eyes were Open; His Wonderful Prophecy (Numbers xxiv.)

Aims. (1) *To lead the children to further understand the connection between the Old and New Testaments.* (2) *To impress the thought,* "*The wondrous things of Thy law.*"

PREPARATION

Have the words of Ps. cxix. 18, "Open thou mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law," written on the board or printed on a card. Read them to the children, and discuss their appropriateness as a short prayer before reading our Bibles. Speak of those to whom God gives the power to see into the future. Give the name prophet or seer. Say that in this lesson we shall hear of some of the wondrous things written in God's law which Balaam was allowed to foretell.

PRESENTATION

(1) The Prophecy about the Future Greatness of Israel.

(a) *How Goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob, and thy Tabernacles, O Israel . . . and as Cedar Trees beside the Waters* (Num. xxiv. 5 and 6).—Read these words to the class, and remind them of Balaam's position on Mount Peor, where he could see the encampment of the Israelites. Tell the story of the great sculptor who said, when looking at a rough piece of marble, "I see an angel in this marble." Discuss the meaning of the words, and lead the children to see that Balaam was prophesying about the future of Israel—their greatness and prosperity. Describe the gardens by the riverside near Balaam's home. Show pictures of the aloes and the cedar tree (*Natural History of the Bible*, Tristram, p. 342), leading children to the ideas of beauty and strength. Briefly tell how the prophecy was fulfilled in the Promised Land.

(b) *He shall pour the Water out of his Buckets . . . in many Waters* (Num. xxiv. 7).—Refer to the way in which the land was watered near the Euphrates; water fetched in buckets and suspended from the two ends of a pole. Explain the absence of water in many places in the East; refer to the difficulties of the children of Israel in this respect, and thus lead them to see that Balaam was again prophesying of the *plenty* in the promised land. Read Moses' words to the people, Deut. viii. 7.

(2) The Prophecy about the Coming of the Messiah.

I shall see Him, but not now . . . Israel (Num. xxiv. 17).—Give the

correct reading, "I behold Him, but not now; I see Him, but not nigh." Ask the children to whom they think these words refer. Tell the children that Balaam lived over a thousand years before Christ was born on the earth, and so lead them to realise the wonderful power of prophecy given to him by God. Try to bring home to them in some degree the idea of a thousand years by comparison with the age of a *very* old man; over ten times as long as the whole of his life.

A Star coming out of Jacob, and a Sceptre arising out of Israel.—Explain to the children that the appearance of a special star was taken to indicate the coming of a King, and lead them to give briefly the story of the wise men who came from the East to worship Christ because they had seen the star. Refer to the description of Christ, "I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star," Rev. xxii. 16.

Describe the Sceptre which is given to the King at his coronation. Quote the words which the Archbishop uses when he delivers it to the King: "Receive the Royal Sceptre, the ensign of kingly power and justice," and so lead the children to understand the meaning of the prophecy, "A Sceptre shall rise out of Israel."

APPLICATION

(*a*) Let the children find the *Te Deum* in the Prayer Book, and find verses which specially refer to Christ as the King and Christ as the Judge.

(*b*) Have the leading thought repeated again, and discuss with the children how we may have our eyes open, so that we may see the wondrous things of God's law. The subjects of private prayer, attendance at Sunday School and Church and the reading of the Bible would be briefly discussed.

Canticle: The *Te Deum.*

Blackboard: "Open Thou mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law."

Balaam—the man whose eyes were open—prophesied:

(*a*) Of the future greatness and prosperity of the children of Israel.

(*b*) About the coming of the Messiah.

"Thou art the King of Glory: O Christ."

"We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge."

Expression Work: Writing during the week their views as to the character of Balaam.

Teacher's Preparation: Read Num. xxiv. (Only part of the prophecy is taken in the lesson.) Any good Commentary on this chapter; *e.g.* the S.P.C.K. Commentary. The *Te Deum.*

Lesson XXV. SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY

The End of a Noble Life on Earth (Deut. xxxiv.)

Aim. *To lead children to realise how God honoured His servant Moses.*

PREPARATION

Refer to the previous Thursday, and what Christians were specially thinking of on that day. Refer to Christ's words, "It is finished"—the work on earth which the Father had given Him to do was perfectly finished. Refer to Moses' work on earth, which was almost finished.

PRESENTATION

(1) The Ascent of Mount Nebo and the View of the Promised Land from Pisgah.—Show on map where children of Israel were now encamped and position of Mount Nebo. Read Deut. xxxiv. 1, and tell how a Jewish historian has described the scene much more fully. Give a vivid word picture of Moses leaving the camp amidst the tears of the people, who realised that they were now to lose their leader. Describe them accompanying him for some distance, until he made a sign for them to come no farther. Picture him reaching the highest point, Mount Pisgah, and describe the wonderful view he had from there. Show picture, and let children describe it.

(2) The Death and Burial of Moses.—Give Josephus' account of how, when Moses was just bidding farewell to Eleazar and Joshua, a cloud covered him. Compare with the account of Christ's Ascension when "a cloud received Him out of their sight." Read Deut. xxxiv. 5 and 6. Tell that a poetess, Mrs. Alexander, has written a poem describing the burial of Moses.

Method of Dealing with the Poem.—(a) Read the first verse impressively without comment—

"By Nebo's lonely mountain, on this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab, there lies a lonely grave.
And no man knows that sepulchre, and no man saw it e'er,
For the angels of God upturn'd the sod, and laid the dead man there."

(b) *A contrast between the Funeral of a great Leader to-day and Moses' Funeral.*—This will be drawn by the use of verses 2, 3, 5, 6. Give a description of the funeral of some great leader—*e.g.* the funeral of King Edward VII. Speak of the great procession, the thousands of onlookers, the firing of the minute-gun, the soldiers marching with arms reversed, &c. Read verses 5 and 6.

"When the warrior dieth, his comrades in the war,
With arms reversed and muffled drum, follows his funeral car;
They show the banners taken, they tell his battles won,
And after him lead his masterless steed while peals the minute-gun.

Amid the noblest of the land we lay the sage to rest,
And give the bard an honour'd place with costly marble drest;
In the great minster transept, where lights like glories fall
(And the organ rings, and the sweet choir sings) along the emblazon'd wall."

In contrast to this read the two verses (2 and 3) which specially describe Moses' funeral—

"That was the grandest funeral that ever pass'd on earth;
But no man heard the trampling, or saw the train go forth—
Noiselessly as the daylight comes back when night is done,
And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek grows into the great sun;

Noiselessly as the springtime her crown of verdure weaves,
And all the trees on all the hills open their thousand leaves;
So without sound of music, or voice of them that wept,
Silently down from the mountain's crown the great procession swept."

Discuss with the children one or two of the ideas contained in these two verses.

(*a*) The noiseless return of the daylight.

(*b*) "The crimson streak on ocean's cheek" growing into the great sun.

(*c*) The noiseless working of the springtime.

(*d*) The "great procession" that passed down the mountain at Moses' funeral.

APPLICATION

(*a*) Have duty towards God repeated; lead children to suggest how Moses realised and carried out his duty towards God.

(*b*) Refer children to the *Nunc Dimittis*, and Simeon's words: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word," and lead them to realise how Moses might have used similar words on Mount Pisgah.

Hymn: "The Saints of God, their conflict past."

Teacher's Preparation: Any good Commentary on this. Whiston's *Josephus*, vol. i., pp. 192–193.

Lesson XXVI. WHIT-SUNDAY

Can Men be God's Prophets To-day? (Numbers xii.)

Aim. *To impress the leading thought—*

"*Bless'd are the pure in heart*
For they shall see our God" (*Hymn A. and M.* 261).

"*Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*"—2 Pet. i. 21.

(Let leading thought be written on blackboard before school begins, or on slips of paper to be given to children at commencement of lesson.)

PREPARATION

The Israelites were in wilderness. They had previously behaved gluttonously and been punished. Briefly refer to story of the quails (Num. xi. 4, 31–33). Draw from children that Israelites ought to have learnt lesson of contentment, but notwithstanding, more evil followed, this time on part of leaders.

PRESENTATION

The Sedition of Miriam and Aaron.

(a) *The Telling of the Story.*—Tell story (which should have been practised aloud many times): the place: alleged reason for sedition: real reason—jealousy and discontent (Num. xii. 2): God's anger (verse 9): punishment of Miriam and Aaron: Moses' prayer and result. Now say, "Let us read story in Bible."

(b) *The Reading of the Text.*—Read, or allow children (good readers only) to read slowly and carefully Num. xii. 1–14.

Lessons from the Story.

(a) *Moses was God's Prophet.*—Draw attention to this fact. How do we know? Class will find answer (verse 2), and also reply that he did a prophet's work. Comment briefly on fact that a prophet's work is the greatest man can be called to. How then must we regard the work? How treat the Prophet?

(b) *Reverence due to God's Prophet.*—Ask children find words showing that God wishes respect shown to His prophets (verse 8). Reverence therefore due to all doing God's special work—priests, teachers. Ask what commandments kept when such respect shown (verses 3 and 5). Ask for phrases from duties "To submit myself to all my . . . teachers, spiritual pastors." "To honour God's Holy Name and His Word." Lead children to see that one way of honouring God's Name and Word is by showing respect to His officers. How? Helping them, hearing them, fearing to speak against them.

(c) *Why was Moses a Prophet?*—Let children find out some of his qualities; verse 3, "meek"; verse 7, "a servant of God"; verse 13,

"forgiving." Lay stress on fact that he was therefore "pure in heart," for he did what was right. Let children refer to leading thought for result of purity of heart. "They shall see our God." Children will give examples of men who saw much of the things of God—*e.g.* Noah, who "walked with God" (Gen. vi. 8, 9). David, who "walked in God's ways" (1 Kings iii. 14). Daniel, who was ever faithful. All served God; all therefore pure in heart: of each the words true, "Blessed are the pure in heart."

(d) *How did God make Moses a Prophet?*—Children will find answers (verses 6 and 8). God spoke to him in dreams (*cf.* Joseph); visions (*cf.* Daniel); face to face (*cf.* Elijah on Horeb). Moses therefore, like all prophets, possessed clearer spiritual sight than others, and saw much of things of God. "Bless'd . . . they shall *see* our God."

(e) *Who gave Spiritual Sight to the Prophets?*—Class will say "God." Read David's words (2 Sam. xxiii. 2), "The Spirit of the Lord," &c. Also S. Peter's words (see Leading Thought). Again ask for source of spiritual sight and speech.

Can Men be God's Prophets to-day?—Yes! in one way. State that the age of prophesying future events seems past. But refer to first part of Collect for Day. Then draw from children the teaching of Collect that the Holy Spirit will show us something more important, the wonderful things of God.

"By His Spirit, He to us
The secret doth reveal" (213 A. and M.).

Try to show greatness of spiritual sight. Bodily sight good and helpful; spiritual sight far better.

But man must remember the conditions. God's prophets were pure in heart. Only the *pure in heart*, only the *holy men* of God, will gain this special spiritual sight from the Holy Ghost. What then will you sometimes pray for? Conclude by asking children to repeat the leading thought.

Blackboard:

(*a*) Title and Leading Thought; either
(*b*) Headings, beginning with *Moses was God's Prophet;* each to be written when reached; or
(*c*) *God's Great Men:*
Noah—"walked with God."
Moses—"a servant of God."
David—"walked in God's ways."
Daniel—ever faithful.

Work for Week: Either to learn the Duty towards God, or write out verses of hymns illustrating the lesson.

Lesson XXVII. TRINITY SUNDAY

The Vision of Isaiah and the Song of the Seraphim
(Isaiah vi. 1–4)

Aim. *To stir up some interesting thought with regard to the Blessed Trinity.*

PREPARATION

Ask name of Day—Trinity Sunday. Trinity = three, or three persons. "Trinity in Unity." Three persons in one God. Quote "Three in One and One in Three." Ask reason for name Trinity Sunday. Ask whence our knowledge Trinity derived. From New Testament.

The New Testament and the Doctrine. Ask children for occasions when New Testament mentions the Three Persons together. Speak of Christ's Baptism—Read and comment on S. Matt. iii. 16, 17.

The Old Testament and the Doctrine.—New Testament is clear as to doctrine, but what of Old Testament? State that class is about to turn to part of Old Testament which helps us to understand the doctrine.

PRESENTATION

Isaiah a Seer, and why.—Find Isaiah vi. Isaiah a man, but gifted with strong spiritual sight—could see things hidden from many. Refer to previous lesson as to reason for Moses, Noah, David, and Daniel being Seers—say for same reason Isaiah a Seer. "Bless'd are the pure in heart," &c. Read i. 1. Ask for word showing that Isaiah saw more than others. (Vision.) How know vision came from God? See i. 2.

Isaiah's Indignation at Wickedness of People of Judah.—Read v. 18, 20, 22, 25. Comment briefly. Prophet fearful for future of God's people, v. 30.

How God comforted Prophet.—Wicked King Uzziah dying miserably or dead (2 Chron. xxvi. 21). God also sends vision to show Isaiah that He reigns over all; so finally all must be well.

Where was Isaiah at Time of Vision?—Children will find out from vi. 1—apparently in Temple—perhaps having taken part in service, or praying. Therefore in fit state of mind for vision.

The Vision.—Read very slowly and reverently vi. 1–4. Paint word picture of vision.[1] Speak of glory of seraphim: their purity? (able stand presence God): their appearance: their humility? (veiled their faces; unable look upon God: veiled feet and lower part of body; unfit stand presence God): "with twain they did fly;" ready for

[1] The teacher must carefully practise word pictures before giving them to class.

service wherever might be sent. Refer Catechism "My duty towards God . . . to fear Him and to love Him . . . and to serve Him truly all the days of my life."

The Song of the Seraphim.—Read impressively vi. 2. Seraphim already praised God by humility, and readiness to serve. This insufficient. Must openly honour Him with voices. "To worship Him, to give Him thanks . . . and to honour His holy Name and His Word." The cry of the Seraphim. "Holy, Holy, Holy," &c. Why is Holy repeated thrice? Perhaps for emphasis. Perhaps indicate doctrine Trinity. Doctrine also probably indicated in High Priest's blessing (Num. vi. 23–26).

The Song in the Prayer Book.—Read verses 3, 4, 5, 6 of *Te Deum.* Compare with Song of Seraphim. Threefold repetition in *Te Deum* refers to Trinity. The Three Persons named, verses 11, 12, 13. Read *Ter Sanctus* from H. C. Service, "Therefore with angels," &c. Treat similarly.

The Song in our Hymn Books.—Read first verse, Hymn 160 (A. & M.). "Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty," &c. Note repetition. Clearly indicates Trinity. Read verses 1, 2, 3, Hymn 161; ask where writer gained knowledge (Isa. vi.).

N.B.—Time permitting refer Athanasian Creed, verses 3, 5, 15, 16. Also Catechism, "First I learn to believe," &c.

APPLICATION

How Man can be like the Seraphim.—"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Seraphim did God's will by humility, praise, readiness for service. Select any one of these for final impression, *e.g.* humility.

When mention Blessed Trinity, must bow in spirit before throne. Children will say that in some Churches congregations bow at mention of Trinity or at words, "Holy, Holy, Holy!" Why?

Whenever enter Church must bow in spirit. Why? Place where God specially manifests His presence. Whether in Church or outside must remember presence Trinity. How? "My duty towards God is . . . to fear Him . . . to worship Him . . . to honour His Holy Name and His Word."

Blackboard: (*a*) The Title (to be written in parts as they occur in the lesson). Thus—(1) Isaiah, (2) The Vision of, (3) the Seraphim, (4) and the Song of. (*b*) The Headings of the lesson, beginning at *Isaiah a Seer, and Why?*

Work for Week: To write out either—(*a*) An analysis of the lesson; or, (*b*) Verses from the Revelation, or from Hymns resembling the Song of the Seraphim.

Lesson XXVIII. FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Conquest of Canaan (Joshua i., ii. 1–22)

(*Note.*—It is impossible to take this great subject in one lesson, nor is it easy to divide it into three definite parts. The teacher is the best judge of suitable divisions: those made here are merely suggestive.)

Aims. (1) *To show how wonderfully God was directing His people and working His purpose out even in a time of war and bloodshed.* (2) *To illustrate the meaning of true courage by the example of the leader Joshua.* (3) *To give a clear and as far as possible consecutive account of the long promised entrance into Canaan.* (4) *To emphasise the following leading thoughts: Deut. xxxiii. 27–29, "The Eternal God is thy refuge . . . and Who is the sword of thy excellency"; "Be strong and of a good courage"; "Choose you this day whom ye will serve."*

PREPARATION

(1) Each child should be provided with note-book in which maps can be drawn; or cheap blank maps should be provided for each scholar and these gummed into note-books. Coloured pencils. (2) Refer to death of great leader Moses just at the entrance to the Promised Land. Note the position of the people on the map. Picture out how eagerly they had looked forward to this moment. From childhood they had been told of God's promise to Abraham (Gen. xvii. 8). Let children mark the position of the tents of Israel which extended from shores of Dead Sea to Abel-Shittim, six miles away.

PRESENTATION

1. The New Leader.—Lead the children to suggest questions one would ask in choosing a new leader. Write them down, and by reference to his early life, answer them. Moses must have known, for he had chosen him in preference to his own sons. [A hard thing to do.]

(a) *Was he brave?* See Exod. xvii. 9.

(b) *Was he patient?* See Exod. xxxii. 17.

(c) *Was he prayerful?* He spent much time in the Tabernacle. See Exod. xxxiii. 11.

(d) *Was he trustworthy?* See Num. xiii.

God Himself chose Joshua. See ch. i. 1, 2. Refer specially to His command, verses 6, 7.

2. A Peep into the Camp.—By means of a model or picture, lead the children to imagine what was happening on the last night before attempting an entrance into the Promised Land.

(a) *Men.*—Many out "scouting," looking for a safe and easy entrance. By means of map, draw from class suggestions for place, difficulties to be encountered, and nearest towns to attack. Tell that it was spring, the river in flood, and therefore the inhabitants would fear no invasion that way.

(b) *Women and Children.*—Perhaps making their preparations (see Josh. i. 11), cooking, &c. Quite accustomed to it after a wandering life of forty years. Picture special excitement to-night—a new life—a settled home—a land of their own.

(c) *Leaders.*—Note the serious conversation in their tent; the "scouts" have come back, saying there is no means of entrance for a great army, only one or two fords. They decide to send spies to inspect the nearest town, Jericho.

3. The Inhabitants of Palestine.—They belonged to several races and were of a mixed character. They were chiefly agricultural, but some lived in walled cities; no bond of union except hatred of invaders. [How bad when people never work together for good, only for evil.] They were more learned in some ways than the Israelites. [Why?] They worshipped Nature, and believed that the gods resided in every brook and stream. They had altars to Baal their God on every high place. Some of their worship was beautiful, but much was cruel, wicked, unholy. Point out how this was likely to be a great temptation to the Israelites, who had learnt to love Nature in their wanderings. [Let them repeat part of Second Commandment.] Lead children to see that it is man's craving to find out God, which often makes him worship Nature. He sees God's glorious works, and imagines a spirit dwells in them.

APPLICATION

1. Note how aptly the words of the Collect for the day fit in with the teaching of this work of Joshua. So if we trust in God, we can do great deeds. "The Eternal God . . . is the sword of thy excellency."

2. Joshua (Saviour) is the great type of Christ—the soldier, the deliverer.

3. Point out the danger of substituting worship of beautiful things for worship of God. Many people spend Sunday in the open air (good), but forget to go to Church and thank God for His works.

4. Repeat first part of Second Commandment. (See page 59 for continuation of lesson.)

Lesson XXIX. SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Conquest of Canaan (*continued*) (JOSHUA ii. 23; xii.)

Aim. *See previous Lesson.*

PREPARATION

Briefly call to mind the stage reached in this great campaign. Show how beautifully the words of the Collect for the day suit the lesson—the need for "the protection of God's good providence."

Questioning on what has been read at home.

PRESENTATION

1. *The Return of the Spies.*—By the above questioning, and by information supplied by teacher, bring out the following points—

(*a*) The inhabitants were expecting an invasion; they "*feared*" the God of Israel.

(*b*) The situation of Jericho—her wealth; her indolence shown later by their surrender without a blow.

2. *The Crossing of Jordan.*—Jordan has been known to be blocked by a landslip since. God possibly caused such to happen here. (See Commentary.) Refer to the crossing of the Red Sea; absolute faith that God would again perform a miracle. The beautiful words of the Bible narrative. *Read* aloud after careful practice ch. iii. 5, 11, 13, 17; iv. 1–7.

3. *The Encampment at Gilgal.*—Mark on the map. Point out that possibly the women and children would remain here, while the men attacked Jericho. Three wonderful things happened.

(*a*) The keeping of the Passover. [Refer to its institution.]

(*b*) The stopping of the Manna. [Why?]

(*c*) The Visit of the Angel to Joshua—as a soldier to a soldier. Read v. 13, 14, 15.

4. *The Taking of Jericho.*—Briefly describe the scene, and bring out—

(*a*) How their patience was tried—waiting and marching in silence.

(*b*) The victory ascribed to God. "Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city."

(*c*) The promise to Rahab kept. Heb. xi. 30.

5. *The Defeat at Ai.*—After noting place on the map, the incident must be quickly passed over; the purpose in referring to it must be that the great leader trusts God when things go wrong, vii. 6–10.

6. *The War with the Five Kings.*—If there is time to include this incident, show that the cause of the war was Joshua's faithfulness in keeping an unwise promise. Again point out how God used His great power over Nature, and caused a great storm of hail (verse 11), and allowed the light of sun and moon to be more brilliant than usual, in order that Joshua might see. (See Commentary.)

7. *The Advance into the Country.*—They probably now divided up and attacked various parts.

APPLICATION

Contrast the actions of people who fear God as did the Canaanites, with those who love and fear. Discuss the question of rash promises, and whether one should always keep them. What should help us to decide? Point out how we can see God's hand in the ordinary "happenings" of life, if only we look for it, just as in the case of storm, &c.

Blackboard: The map filled in during the lesson. The headings as shown under Presentation.

Hymns 431 or 534 (A. and M.).

Home Work: (*a*) Make a list of the times when God spoke to Joshua, when Joshua spoke to God. (*b*) Answer the question: Can you think of any ways in which God sends angels nowadays?

Lesson continued from page 57.

Blackboard: Map, filled in during lesson.

Hymns 542 or 547 A. and M.

Home Work:

1. Read the account of the visit of the spies.

2. In Hymn 148, what does the writer mean by words, "Joshua now is come to Canaan"?

Teacher's Preparation: If possible the whole book of Joshua should be read before giving the first lesson. All references to the early life of Joshua should be carefully collected. A rough but clear sketch map showing the position of the people at the end of their wanderings will be necessary. This can be drawn on a rolled sheet and kept throughout the course. A similar (blank) map of the land of Canaan will be essential. This will be filled up as the lessons proceed.

Books of Reference:

The History of the People of Israel in Pre-Christian Times Longmans, Green & Co.

Bible Characters. Alexander Whyte.

The One Volume Bible Commentary. Dummelow.

The Land and the Book. The Teacher's Bible. (Maps.)

Lesson XXX. THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Conquest of Canaan: Joshua's Farewell

(Joshua xiii.–xxiv.)

Aim. *See Lesson for First Sunday after Trinity.*

PREPARATION

Discuss the home work, especially the list made of God's talks with Joshua, and notice *when* Joshua sought advice, viz. in small and great things. Teacher should show by means of a map how the tribes had divided out the land, and where the old inhabitants were strongest.

PRESENTATION

1. *The Change in Mode of Life.*—Let the Class now work out what changes had taken place.

(*a*) Change from wandering life to a settled one.

(*b*) Change in dwellings; no longer always in tents.

(*c*) Changes in occupation. Agriculture in all its forms, not only that connected with pasturing of flocks.

(*d*) Change in ideas of God. Perhaps they had learnt evil from those around. [Note the evil consequences of bad companions, however safe one feels.]

2. *Joshua's First Farewell*, perhaps delivered at Shiloh. Read it carefully aloud to children, and summarise it on blackboard. (Josuha xxiii.)

(*a*) He reminds them of God's help in the past.

(*b*) He promises help for the future.

(*c*) He warns them of God's punishments.

3. *Joshua's Second Farewell.*—Picture this most impressive scene: the old man—the heads of all the tribes—the judges, the officers, the people. *Cf.* the last words of a dear friend—how sacred. *Cf.* Christ's last commands. [Do we keep it.] Read carefully xxiv. 14, 15, 16, 22–25, 29, 30.

Emphasise his call for all to make a choice: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." [Specially point out that the day is near for boys and girls of this age to make their choice in Confirmation.]

Joshua could say like S. Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course."

4. *The Death of Joshua.*—Quote the Bible words in their simplicity and strength. "Joshua, the son on Nun, the Servant of the Lord, died."

N.B.—At least ten minutes must be left for a general summing up.

APPLICATION

The Passage of Jordan—a type of Baptism, the entrance into our kingdom.

Though we have become inheritors of the Kingdom in Baptism, yet it is not to be held without a struggle. We need "the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit . . . true godliness," which will be given in Confirmation, and the special strengthening which comes to us in the Holy Communion.

Blackboard: The map quite complete. The two texts: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." "I have fought the good fight."

Hymns 540 or 270 (A. and M.).

Scholars' Work: The children should now complete the maps, and carefully print under them the Leading Thoughts of the three lessons. They should repeat together the words of the Catechism, "My good child . . . diligent prayer."

Lesson XXXI. FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Time of the Judges, with Special Reference to Gideon (The Book of Judges)

Aims. 1. *To show that God often unites His people in a common danger.* 2. *To show the dangers of "wealth and ease."* 3. *To show the formation of a great nation out of a number of tribes.*

PREPARATION

An examination of the maps used in the three previous lessons. Teacher will fill in, and children will copy, the names of the chief oppressors. (See map.)

PRESENTATION

1. The State of the Country.—Lead the children to see how unsettled and disunited the people must be with enemies on all hands. Bring out very carefully that as we read of their doings we find them rash, cruel, revengeful like their neighbours, but through it all they knew God as their Father, and so they had nobler ideas of truth, justice, humanity than their neighbours.

Discuss the difference between ourselves and them.

They knew God only as "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." We know Him as "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," "the author and finisher of our faith," Heb. xi. 39, 40; xii. 2.

2. Oppressors and Deliverers.—It is difficult to go fully into this, but teacher should lead the children to see that over and over again the Israelites forsook God in time of peace, and that He again and again delivered them—often by most unexpected means.

Give each child a slip of paper with different texts written on, iii. 8, 9, 10, 11; iii. 12, 15, 30; iv. 2, 3, 23, 24; vi. 1; x. 7, 9, 10; xi. 32; xiii. 1; xvi. 31. From these incidents fill up map. Note that a woman was on one occasion the deliverer of God's people.

3. Gideon. A Typical Judge.—Tell the story as concisely as possible, and recommend children to read it at home. Note in it the—

(1) *Gradual Strengthening of Gideon's Character—*

(*a*) Threshes his corn in secret.

(*b*) Fears on account of his own littleness. [Great men are always humble.]

(*c*) Destroys the altar of Baal. [Sin must be cast out first.]

(*d*) Afraid of his own people. [How often our own friends keep us back from God.]

(*e*) Bold enough to blow a trumpet. [With work comes courage.]

(*f*) Requires a sign—perhaps to convince his followers. [A story is told that his mother made the fleece into a coat which he wore under his armour; this reminded him of God's promises.]

(*g*) The zealous haste and careful thought for the battle. [God helps those who help themselves.]

(*h*) The encouragement from, and trust in, God.

"The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour," vi. 12.

"Surely I will be with thee," verse 16.

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon," vii. 20.

"The Lord himself shall rule over you," viii. 23.

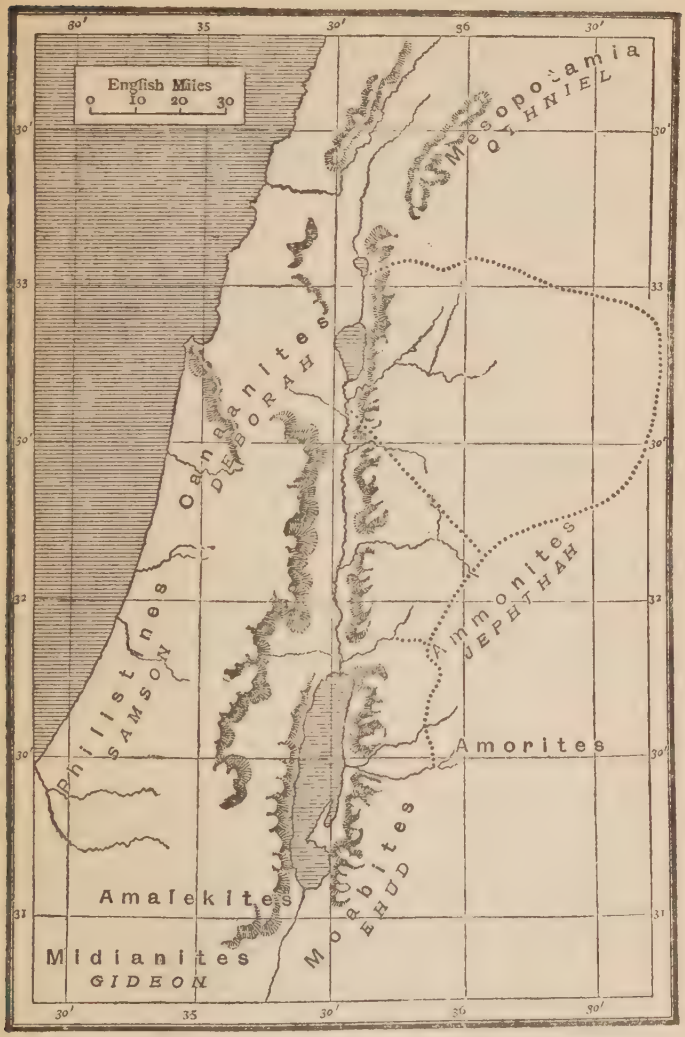
(2) *Gideon's Mistake.*—In the time of "wealth and ease," he ceased to ask God's help; he acted on his own initiative, and perhaps with a good motive "he caused Israel to sin."

APPLICATION

Refer to Collect, and show the necessity to pray "that we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal." Summarise the lessons taught under *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, *g* above.

Scholars' Work: Copy the map. Print below it "Watch and Pray."

Hymn 91 A. and M.



OPPRESSORS AND DELIVERERS IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES

Teacher's Preparation: Read carefully *History of People of Israel*, ch. iv. Note the office of a judge in those days. Try to realise that this book relates the doings of local heroes, and that these histories were collected about 600 B.C., and serve to show the state of unrest and lack of unity which led to the desire for a King. Keep in mind, "These all having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise." A blank map will be wanted. The names of oppressors and deliverers will be filled in as lesson proceeds.

Lesson XXXII. FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Ruth: A Story of Love's Sacrifice (The Book of Ruth)

Aims. *To show the other side of the picture—the quiet home life of the people in troublous times. It is this which keeps alive the true worship of God. 2. To set before the minds of the girls especially a high ideal of womanhood.*

PREPARATION

By means of pictures (very good picture post-cards can be obtained) the teacher should graphically describe the simple village life of this time—the tending of flocks and herds—ploughing, sowing, reaping. Cp. the work of the women with that of our own time.

PRESENTATION

1. *The Sojourn in Moab.*—Briefly tell the incident; point out on the map. A picture of Ruth will best impress the idea of the simple but beautiful Moabitess.

2. *The Return of Naomi.*—Dwell upon her sadness—husband and sons dead—a stranger in a strange land—the natural desire to return home. Picture the journey—on foot—her two daughters-in-law to set her on the way—the sadness when "Good-bye" to her near relatives has to be said. Cp. Conduct of Ruth and Orpah. Both sorry (verse 10), but one is capable of self-sacrifice, the other not. Read aloud verses 14–18.

3. *The Entrance into Bethlehem.*—Old friends gather round to hear the news; no letters. Perhaps many would look askance at Ruth, a

stranger. This is part of her sacrifice. [Do we always treat strangers kindly ?]

4. *Ruth the Gleaner.*—This very pretty harvest scene should be vividly pictured. Boaz the rich kinsman, kind, generous, looked up to by his workpeople. Note the beautiful salutation "The Lord be with you," "The Lord bless you." [Cp. the same words in our Prayer Book and show their appropriateness.] [Is this the relation between masters and servants to-day ? Why not ?]

5. *Friendship of Ruth and Boaz.*—How did it come about ? He recognised her kind heart (ii. 11–12). How did he show his kindness ? The children can find out for themselves; ii. 14, 15, 16; iii. 15. Teacher might here quote four verses from poem "Handfuls," beginning "'Tis Ruth from Moab answered me."

6. *Ruth's Reward.*—Very briefly describe how Boaz befriended Naomi and Ruth by buying the inheritance. Point out the very great reward given to Ruth, in that she became the ancestress of David, and thus of our Lord Himself.

7. *Naomi's Reward.*—Lead the girls to see how closely these women were associated—the confidence shown by Ruth—the advice given by the elder, and followed by the younger. Read iv. 14–16.

Read as much as time permits of the poem "Handfuls." Let children give examples of God's "handfuls"—home, health, means of grace. Do we drop "handfuls" unawares ? A secret kind act or word, a little self-denial not only in Lent but also at other times—a prayer for someone in trouble ?

Give the names of any men or women you know who have been examples of self-sacrifice.

Blackboard : The headings under Presentation.

Home Work : Find in the Prayer Book how often the words similar to Boaz's salutation occur.

Hymn : A. and M. 210.

Teacher's Preparation : Use same books as in previous four lessons. The picture "Ruth and Naomi" should be studied and used as an illustration. A little booklet, *Handfuls* (Partridge, London, 1*d.*), may be freely used for quotations.

Lesson XXXIII. SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Samuel—the Seer

Aim. *To show that the pure in heart see God in a special way.*

Note to Teacher.—The story of Samuel is very long; many incidents in his life will probably be known to the children. Reference should be made to the fact that he was the last of the Judges, but this lesson is only intended to work out one idea in his life.

PREPARATION

Raise the question of "prophets"—*e.g.* a weather-prophet. Meaning? Lead on to show that the reason why some people can foretell the weather is that they have thought more about it, and understand it.

Some people, children too, know what a friend, mother, father will say, do, or like. Why? Because they know one another, love one another, and therefore understand one another. Can we tell what God will say or do? Yes! if we *know* Him well.

PRESENTATION

1. The Narrative.—Tell briefly the story of Saul seeking the asses. Read 1 Sam. ix. 6, 15, 18, 19. Note Samuel's words, "I am the Seer." "The Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before" (verse 20). How was it Samuel knew what was in the mind of God? Because he knew God—he talked with God (vii. 9; viii. 21). He understood God's ways, and so could *see* what was going to happen.

2. What made Samuel a Seer?

(a) *Samuel's Mother.* A good woman who prayed for her baby before he was born (i. 10); promised him to God; kept her promise; prayed for him (ii. 1–10). *Cf.* The Song of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and find it in Prayer Book.

(b) *Samuel's Childhood.*—Picture briefly his work in the tabernacle—only a child—working in God's House every day. He must often have thought of God, prayed to Him, read about Him.

(c) *Samuel's Call.*—God spoke to him, although only a little child. "The Lord was with him" (iii. 19, 21. *Cf.* S. Luke ii. 40).

(d) *Samuel's Work.*—As with Jesus, we hear nothing between childhood and manhood. How do you think he spent his time? Afterwards he became the leader of his people.

(a) *He prayed for them in Trouble* (vii. 5, 8, 9), and "the Lord heard him."

(b) *He prayed for them when making a Choice.*—Point out that he felt somewhat hurt when they required a king, but he prayed for them (viii. 6). He obeyed God's word (viii. 7 and 10).

(c) *He Helped and Advised the King* (x. 24; xv. 1–3).

(d) *He reproved the King.*—This required courage (xv. 16, 17).

Samuel's life then was a life of Prayer.

"Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among those that call upon His Name."

Before he died he founded a school of prophets, men who should think of God, speak with God, and God would speak with them. They would be Seers.

APPLICATION

Who are the people upon whom we rely in difficulty—the careless ones, or the prayerful ones? Children who really pray cannot be cowards, or untruthful. Why? (1) Because prayer makes us sincere. We cannot "pretend" to God; we must cease to pray. (2) Because those, who really pray, see God more clearly than others; they are *seers.*

Blackboard: Samuel the Seer.

"Blest are the pure in heart, for they shall *see* God."

"If any man will do His Will, he shall *know.*"

Hymn 261, A. and M.

Work at Home: Write out in parallel columns the "Song of Hannah" and "The Magnificat."

Lesson XXXIV. SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The First King—The Lord's Anointed (1 Sam. viii.–xii.)

Aim. *To teach God's care for His people. "For the Lord will not forsake His people for His great Name's Sake."*

PREPARATION

The Israelites demand a King.

(a) *The Judges.*—Remind the children of their recent lessons. How had the children of Israel been governed? Who was the greatest of the Judges? When he grew old, his work was terribly missed. Let the children read viii. 1, 3, 4, 5. Samuel was hurt at the Israelites' request. Why should this be? Why did they ask for a King? Were they doing right or wrong? Let children read verses 6–9 to themselves before they answer. Would this grieve Samuel? Why so? Because he loved his people.

(b) "*This will be the Manner of King.*"—The children will perhaps be able to describe an Eastern despot such as Samuel pictures; if not, let them glance down verses 10–18. "Nay, but we will have a King." Read aloud verses 19, 22. How was God dealing with His children in their persistence? Did He absolutely refuse what He knew was not for their immediate good? Children may suggest the patience of the Father, and give other instances (Gen. xviii. 23–33, God's promise of forbearance in the punishment of Sodom).

PRESENTATION

(a) The Choice of a King.—The children will have learned the circumstances of chap. ix. in a previous lesson; briefly revise the story of *Saul's first anointing*, quoting and dwelling particularly on verses 6, 9. Ask what new gift prepared the young King for his work at the outset? (x. 10). Compare with others who are similarly strengthened; the children may suggest Christ at His baptism; their own baptismal gift.

(b) His formal presentation to the Nation.

i. *Saul's early Popularity.*—Saul had already been informally presented to the people as their King, and had won fame and popularity as a victor. Tell the children briefly the bare facts of his delivery of the men of Jabesh from the tyranny of a foreign neighbour (chap. xi.). Use a map. The children must read the account later for themselves. Now came

ii. *The important Ceremony at Gilgal* when Saul was declared King before God and all the people; picture a great gathering of Israelites, representatives of every tribe, ranged in order on a wide plain rising

into hills along one side ; show Gilgal on map (near fords of Jericho) : ask why that place was chosen ? It was a sacred spot to the Israelites. (The first resting-place on their entry into Canaan.) Compare this ceremony with our coronation service in its solemnity, its rejoicings.

iii. *Samuel's Address.*—Samuel then addresses the great crowd. Picture the hoary old man standing beside the young King on rising ground and looking rather sadly over the great mass of people. Why should he feel sad ? It was a kind of leave-taking. There will not be time to read the whole speech. The teacher should narrate the substance of each section, drawing the children's attention to verses here and there. Verses 1–5 *Samuel vindicates himself.* He evidently is still feeling rather hurt, and he first calls both King and people to witness that he has always judged them uprightly. Notice what he calls the King in verse 3. What would that title make the people realise ? Children may suggest " that God was still watching over them and their King," " that the King had a solemn duty to his people for which he had to answer to God—his was a sacred position." " The King was to them a sign of God's protection " ; in this way he represented God to them.

Who, many years later, came as a heavenly King to earth with the same title ? (Christ—the Anointed.)

Verse 6 and following. Samuel convinces the Israelites of their Sin.—Samuel then, after describing God's goodness to them in the past, shows them again how sinful they had been in not trusting to God to protect them ; let children read verses 12, 13. Samuel's solemn words and a most unusual storm, which became as a sign that he was speaking truly, at last convinced the Israelites of their wrong-doing and led them to confess their fault.

Verses 19–25. *Confession and Consolation.*—With what feelings would Samuel listen to their confession ? See now what words of comfort he is able to give them. Read verses 20–22, but notice also the warning in verse 25. This was the last time that Samuel took any great public part in the Israelites' affairs. Had it been a happy or a sorrowful occasion ? Why so ? He had had to exercise great patience. Who had been the more patient, Samuel or God ? Recall God's reproof of Samuel.

APPLICATION

In this way conclude the lesson, leaving as the last idea that of God's patient dealing with wrong-doers, His readiness to forgive and protect. The children would suggest which of Samuel's words would comfort the Israelites most (see Aim). This quotation would be a suitable blackboard summary.

Passages for Teacher's Study : 1 Sam. viii.–xii. inclusive.

Lesson XXXV. EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

A King's Downfall and Rejection (1 Sam. xiii.-xvi.)

Aim. *To convey the lesson—"Behold to obey is better than sacrifice."*

PREPARATION

Saul's early Promise.—Recall to the children's minds (i) the solemn way in which Saul was prepared for his responsibilities; (ii) the early promise of the young King—his prowess in war, his popularity.

Describe Saul's busy reign. Show on map the position of the Philistines' country, and briefly narrate that the greater part of Saul's reign was one long struggle with these people. Quickly and vividly describe the sudden incursions to which the Israelites were liable, resulting in the driving off of their herds, the robbing of their fields and vineyards. Saul had plenty of opportunity to show his powers as a warrior. But there are stories of his wars which reveal that, though great as a soldier, Saul was weak in other ways and unworthy to be King.

PRESENTATION

Saul's Downward Grade

Incident 1.—The Sacrifice of Gilgal.

A Serious Philistine Incursion.—When Saul had been reigning about fifteen or sixteen years (for Jonathan his son was old enough to command soldiers), the Philistines were particularly troublesome. They had overspread the land eastwards as far as Michmash (show on map). In answer to a spirited attack on this fortress by Jonathan they brought a greater and greater number of troops, until the Israelites in terror were deserting from Saul's army and hiding from their enemies.

Saul's Retreat.—He, with the remnant of his army, retreated to Gilgal, on the plains of Jericho (map), fearing every day that the Philistines would swoop down upon him. Samuel had sent to say that he would meet him there to offer sacrifice and pray for God's help.

His Disobedience.—Read 1 Sam. xiii. 8–10. Was it wrong of Saul to be anxious that all the people should join in prayer for help? What was his fault? Disobedience, impatient haste, a want of trust. Did not God know just as well as Saul did in what distress they were? Notice Samuel's stern question, "What hast thou done?" What answer does Saul make? Let children read verses 11, 12.

Samuel's Warning.—Samuel, however, has a solemn warning from God; let children read verses 13, 14 for themselves. The teacher then should briefly deal with the rest of the chapter and chapter xiv., by saying that the Philistines became more and more masters of Saul's kingdom until the Israelites were forbidden to make even swords and spears for themselves.

INCIDENT 2.—SAUL'S DESTRUCTION OF THE AMALEKITES.

Saul's Commission.—Because Saul was a great warrior God gave him a special piece of work to do—to punish the Amalekites. Explain that they were a people very like the Arabs, who lived in the wide region between Palestine and Egypt (use map), and that they were rich in flocks and herds; that God was angered with them, because, years and years ago, when the Israelites were travelling from Egypt to Palestine these people had done them an injury—we are not told what. Let children read xv. 3, and suggest why we think they must have done something atrocious.

Explain that the spoil was "devoted," and remind of Achan's sin and terrible punishment (Joshua vii.).

Saul's Disobedience.—Remark on God's wrath against disobedience. How did Saul act? Let children read verses 8, 9. The teacher should read verses 11, 12, 13. Ask the children to remark on Saul's words. They should say that Saul was telling a falsehood: compare with his former answer to Samuel: Saul has degenerated. Let children read to themselves verses 14, 15, and ask, what else is there that we despise in Saul's answer? And when Samuel shows his fault, does Saul say he has done wrong? Let children look at verses 20, 21: they should remark that Saul is hardened and persists in his untruth and in his meanness in blaming his people. Lay stress on the solemnity of verses 22, 23.

APPLICATION

Ask the children how *the kingdom was "rent from Saul"?* Why was David chosen? God looks upon the heart. Did Saul know of the choice? Why not? It would have led to civil war. Which is David's city? Why do we always specially remember its name?

So, although Saul did not as yet know it, his wrongdoing had brought its punishment. (In his rejection and in his loss of character.) Which verse of what we have read is the one best worth remembering? (See Aim.)

Lesson XXXVI. NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

A Character Lesson on David

Aim. *To teach what is meant by "A man after God's own heart."*

(The children will not have time for much reading; the object of the lesson will be, in the main, to narrate incidents in the life of David, from which the children may form some judgment of his character.)

PREPARATION

A Man after God's own Heart.—Remind the children of God's choice, and ask what gift was bestowed on David on the occasion of Samuel's visit to Bethlehem. It is not wonderful therefore that David became beloved and famous.

We shall see during lesson how although David committed grievous sins, he was yet in many ways "a man after God's own heart."

PRESENTATION

Incidents in the Life of David.

1. *David and Goliath.*—The children will be able to give sufficient detail of this and of David's slaughter of the lion and the bear to enable the teacher quickly to draw from them that David was strong, brave, trustful in God, and modest. Ask what helped him to do such deeds. "And the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." 1 Sam. xvi. 13.

2. *David Saves the Life of Saul* (chap. xxvi.).—Introduce by saying that Saul could not help discovering that as David grew up God was with him more and more as a help and guide. What have we already noticed, on the contrary, of Saul's character? It is not surprising then to read that Saul began to hate David, and even to attempt to take his life.

David had a very hard life, and even had to wander over the country hiding from Saul and his soldiers.

Narrate the incidents of chap. xxvi. Get the children to discuss David's action. What great temptation would there be to David? What knowledge would make the temptation specially strong? Read verses 9, 10, 11, and ask why David refrains. In this way draw from the children David's forgiving spirit, his self-restraint, his patient trust in God, and refer to the Leading Thought, "A man after," &c. . . .

3. *David and Absalom.*—Introduce by saying that David had been

King for some years and his sons were grown into young men. Amongst his sons Absalom was conspicuous. Children will be able to give the facts of his beauty and of his father's love for him; probably also of

Absalom's Pride and Ambition.—If not, tell of this, and how it led Absalom even to conspire against his father. Quote 2 Sam. xv. 6, and ask the children to suggest how "he stole their hearts." Narrate that after acting with great deceit Absalom suddenly declared open war against his father.

David's Flight.—He, not wishing Absalom to come and spoil the beautiful city of Jerusalem (verse 14), chose rather to flee away to the east and to cross the Jordan. Picture the mournful procession of the King and all his household, with a host of soldiers and people who were faithful to him (verses 23, 30), moving away into the desert. But David found many to provide for his needs (xvii. 27). Why? "A man after God's own heart" makes friends of all faithful people.

The Battle with Absalom.—Soon David had to prepare his army to meet Absalom (xviii. 1–5). Describe David's resolution to go forth personally, his people's devotion to him; quote "thou art worth ten thousands of us." Would David really desire to go out to battle? Why not? Notice his command in the hearing of all, "to deal gently" with Absalom.

Absalom's Death.—Describe how Joab, David's clever general, led Absalom's scattered army into a wild woody region, and there "the wood devoured more people . . ." (verse 8). Get the children's ideas here; they will also tell probably of Absalom's disaster and Joab's slaughter.

Describe briefly how Ahimaaz overran Joab's first messenger to David. What would he wish to do? Read to children verses 28–32. What does David's first question show? Let the children read the last verse to themselves; do not read it aloud. Ask what this story makes us feel about David? Who was it who was filled with love and grief for a sinful people and wept over their city?

4. *David's Pride* (chap. xxiv.). His sin. His repentance. The punishment he chooses, and why. His grief, and what it shows.

APPLICATION

This will have been made as the lesson proceeds. Summarise the points of the lesson, and impress the leading idea by asking the children to explain how David was "a man after God's own heart."

Nelson's Pictures: 88. "David sparing Saul." 89. "Death of Absalom."

Teacher's Study: 1 Sam. xvii., xxvi.; 2 Sam. xv., xviii., xxiv.

Lesson XXXVII. TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Temple at Jerusalem

Aim. *To teach the importance of public worship.* "*Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face evermore*" (Ps. cv. 4).

PREPARATION

David's Desire to Build a Temple (2 Sam. vii.).—Ask why David had this desire; tell Nathan's answer. Read the promise, verses 12, 13; to whom do they refer? Look at the words "for ever"; do they refer to someone else? What does He build up in God's Name? Not exactly a house, but a vast assembly of people to be a Kingdom (the Church).

PRESENTATION

1. The Preparation for the Temple.—Suggest that although David was disappointed, he would find pleasure in instructing Solomon.

(a) *Solomon is publicly entrusted with the Work* (1 Chron. xxviii.).—David was now an old man; he had reigned over Israel for forty years. He was now going, before he died, to place Solomon upon his throne. Picture to the children a vast representative gathering at Jerusalem, and the grandeur and solemnity of the occasion. It was to be something more then an enthronement. Solomon was to undertake a special work.

Let children read verses 2, 3. Why was David forbidden this privilege? Before all the assembly David bids Solomon seek God's help for the work, and gives him the written plans and directions for every part of it; let the children glance through verses 11–18. Read verse 19. What kind of work would Solomon feel he was undertaking?

(b) *The People are to take a Part.*—This was, so far, David's own preparation; but how could he make the congregation feel that they had a share in the work? Let children look quickly through chap. xxix. 1–5. "Who then is willing . . . ?" Let the children read verse 9, and say why David should "rejoice with a great joy"? It must have been a most impressive gathering, and that great mass of people with the King must have felt united and strong in thus working and thinking together.

(c) *David's Thanksgiving and Prayer.*—Let the children look through verses 10–17 and describe David's words in *one* word—"praise" or "thanksgiving" or "worship."

Then look at verses 18, 19, and say what they are about—prayer for the people and for Solomon. And in the next verse 20, what are we told? That this great band of people all worshipped together.

Where do these words come ?—"We assemble and meet together to render thanks . . . to hear His holy word, and to ask those things which are necessary. . . ." Does this in any way describe the gathering we have been reading about ? How should *our* assembling together help us ? It should make us feel strong and united as it did David and his people.

2. The Completion of the Temple.

(a) *The Ark brought to its Place.*—We must try now to imagine a most beautiful building completed—Solomon's Temple—with its pillars and most of its woodwork overlaid with gold; its beautiful coloured hangings are all in place; all the furniture and the vessels are there bright and gleaming and ready for use. The singers with their instruments are there; the priests in their white robes, and a large congregation assembled.

When we have built a new Church, what happens before regular services are held in it ? So, Solomon and his people dedicated or solemnly offered the new Temple to God: but not yet.

Something of great importance has yet to be put into its place. Ask children how God made it quite plain to these early peoples that He was really with them ? Where did He show Himself ? The Ark therefore was a most precious possession, because it seemed to the Israelites to stand for God's presence. It would have a special place, *the Holiest place*, and would not be carried into the Temple till everything else was complete.

(b) *The Shechinah.*—What would the Israelites hope for, when it had been solemnly carried in ? What would the great Light mean to them ? That God accepted His Temple.

Let children read 2 Chron. v. 13, 14. What feelings would pass through the great crowd of people ? Do we need to see the Light in order to feel the same reverence ? Why not ? Who was it who taught that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him *in spirit* and in truth" ? *We* can understand that God is with us always, and specially so when we are gathered together for public worship; but the Israelites needed the Light to convince them of God's Presence; the Temple was now to them a sacred place.

APPLICATION

Bear in mind the aim of the Lesson throughout: summarise and further impress by asking as a final question, Why then did David desire to build a Temple ? What great desire should this stir up in us ?

Chapters for Teacher's Study: 2 Sam. vii.; 1 Chron. xxviii., xxix.; 2 Chron. iii., iv., v.

Lesson XXXVIII. ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

"Thou hast given a Banner to them that fear Thee"

(1 Kings xvii., xviii.)

Aim. *To present to the class a high ideal of bravery.*

PREPARATION

Refer to previous lesson, and describe condition of Israel under Ahab—Baal worshipped—God forgotten—His Prophets killed. God needs someone to fight for Him and put down idol-worship. Let children read title of lesson from blackboard, and tell them they will understand the meaning as lesson proceeds. Remind the class of need of preparation for any great work, and show how God has been preparing a man who is now ready to fight under His banner, against Baal. Let children read Deut. xxxiii. 25, and ask them to find out in lesson how God gave His servant strength to carry out this great work.

PRESENTATION

1. *Elijah's Early Life.*—Give name "Elijah." Explain meaning—"My God is Jehovah." Point out on map and describe Gilead briefly. Situated on eastern side of Jordan valley, river Yarmuth northern boundary, Jabbok running through centre; very mountainous; mountains crossed by a number of valleys; country wild, uncivilised, and continually at war with wandering tribes.

Discuss Elijah's early life among the mountains and the solitudes of the wilderness, and show that this free open-air life had taught him to love Nature and Nature's God as no other could have done.

Let children suggest the effect encounters with wild tribes, dwelling in caves and river clefts, would have on Elijah. He would be fleet-footed, capable of enduring fatigue, hunger and thirst, and would come prepared to do battle for God until his life's end. Remind children of their own baptism, when they through their god-parents promised to fight against sin, the world, the flesh and the devil.

2. *Elijah's First Appearance.*—Tell that before a soldier can fight for his King he must know his flag and be able to recognise it at all times;

must have his King's watchword and be ready to answer when he calls. Let class read 1 Kings xvii. 1, "The Lord God . . . liveth," and ask children to notice how faithfully Elijah remembered it all through his life. Give brief description of appearance, and lead children to imagine a man very like the description of S. John the Baptist in S. Matt. iii. 4. Let class read the verse for themselves, and if possible show a picture of the prophet. (Nelson's.)

3. *Meeting of Elijah and Ahab.*—Describe visit to the King to proclaim his message: "No rain nor dew but according to my word." Bring out Elijah's bravery in approaching Ahab with words of punishment. Picture the King's anger, and contrast with quiet, fearless behaviour of God's servant. Ask class, why was this? God was protecting him. Tell that for three years Ahab and Jezebel were seeking to kill Elijah, but were not successful. Refer to words of Hymn 328, A. and M., verse 3, and show how Elijah was carrying this out.

Tell that the famine is now to be ended, and God sends the prophet with a message to the King. Read 1 Kings xviii. 1, 2, and let children again notice how bravely Elijah is bearing the banner for his master, and tell that in another lesson they will hear of the bold defence which he makes for God against Baal. Refer to epistle 1 Cor. xv. 10, and show that S. Paul's words were equally true in this case.

APPLICATION

Bring out the need for preparation for doing God's work, the ways in which children may prepare by ready obedience and prayer, and show that they too have a battle to fight. Try to impress the duty of boldly standing up for the right, and of loving obedience to our baptismal vows "to be faithful and steadfast and brave, against Satan, the flesh and the world."

Blackboard: Title, and verse 3 of Hymn 328.

Hymn 541, verses 1 and 3.

Expression Work: Let class answer question, "How did Elijah show himself a worthy soldier of his King?"

Teacher's Private Study: 1 Kings xvii., xviii. (parts of). *Religion of Israel*, by R. L. Ottley, chap. iv. *Historical Geography of Holy Land*, by George Adam Smith, chap. xxiv.

Lesson XXXIX. TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

"Who is on the Lord's Side?" A Fight for God
(1 Kings xviii.)

Aim. *To give an example of true courage in standing up for the right.* "*Manfully to fight under His banner,*" *etc.*

PREPARATION

Briefly recapitulate main points of last lesson, and question how Elijah had carried out his work. Describe state of country; refer to famine and idol-worship, and let children suggest how God had protected Elijah when Ahab had sought his life.

PRESENTATION

1. *Meeting of Ahab and Elijah.*—Let class read 1 Kings xviii. 1, 17, 18. Picture the meeting, especially noticing Elijah's fearless conduct. Why? God is protecting him, for he has chosen whom he will serve. Give Elijah's message to Ahab to send all the prophets of Baal and the people to meet him on Mount Carmel, to decide who is the true God.

2. *Scene on Mount Carmel.*—Find Carmel on map. Describe briefly; peak furthest away from sea; place still called by name meaning "The Burning," "The Sacrifice." Picture scene vividly—Ahab in royal chariot attended by servants richly dressed; false prophets of Baal in white robes and high pointed caps; crowds of people who have been coming since early morning, eagerly waiting to see what will happen; and one man, God's prophet, Elijah, standing alone. How recognised? Refer to previous lesson, dress, &c. Specially emphasise the prophet's bravery. Quote verse 2 of Hymn 542. "Stand up for Jesus," and comment. All at once a voice rings out loud and clear. Let class read 1 Kings xviii. 21. "How long halt ye . . . if Baal, then follow him." Discuss meaning of "halt," illustrating by reference to traveller coming to place where two roads meet. Stands still, does not know whether to go to right or left; hesitates, halts between two opinions. Israelites now in same position; cannot make up their minds, whether to serve God or Baal. Must decide now. Let children read Joshua xxiv. 15. Elijah has a plan to help them to choose.

3. *The Sacrifice.*—Read 1 Kings xviii. 23, 24. Elijah is to offer one sacrifice to God, and the prophets of Baal another to their god, and the God that answers by fire "let him be God." Describe what happened. Picture out and let children try to imagine scene. Altar raised to Baal—animal laid on it—450 priests running round and crying, "O Baal, hear us," each time more loudly than before, and in their excitement shouting and dancing. Still no answer. Contrast with action of Elijah. It is now afternoon, and the prophet calls the people around him—questions them. Why did not Baal answer? Was he asleep or on a journey? He was an idol, and could not hear. Describe very vividly each step. Elijah first builds an altar, digs a trench round, pours water into it, so that people can see clearly the miracle which is to happen; does not shout or dance, but prays earnestly. Let children read verses 36, 37, and try to imagine the intense silence and eagerness of the people and the prophets of Baal.

4. *God's Answer.*—What happens? Read verse 38 to class. Let children suggest effect on people. What would *they* think. Read verse 39, and tell that the words must have made the hills, cliffs, and hollows resound with the shout, "The Lord He is God." Compare with S. Matt. iv. 10, and first commandment, and show that now the Israelites are beginning to realise that there is only one God, and their duty is to worship Him alone.

APPLICATION

We do not worship idols, but whatever stands first and is loved better than God is an idol. We wish to serve the true God. How can we get help? Quote Catechism, "Not able to do . . . prayer," and obedience to God's commands. Refer to baptism of a little child who, when he is received into the Church, is signed "with the sign of the Cross in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end."

Blackboard: Title, "The Lord He is God," and "Manfully to fight," etc.

Expression Work: Let class write down any way in which they may stand up in defence of right.

Hymn 542, verses 2, 3.

Teacher's Preparation: 1 Kings xviii., and *Historical Geography of Holy Land*, by G. A. Smith, pp. 337–341.

Lesson XL. THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Still Small Voice. A Call to Service (1 Kings xix.)

Aims. (a) *To help children to realise God's loving and protecting power.*
(b) *To teach the blessedness of work in God's service.*

PREPARATION

Introduce lesson by referring very briefly to events at Carmel. What happened after? Show how Jezebel tried to take Elijah's life, and let class suggest what effect this would have on him. Tell that, disappointed and weary, the prophet loses hope, his courage fails, his faith is weakened, and he seeks a refuge from his troubles in solitude. Let the children follow in imagination the journey to the desert, where, lying down under a juniper tree (a flowering broom about 8 or 10 feet high—*cf.* with height of walls of room), he asks God to allow him to die.

PRESENTATION

1. *In the Wilderness.*—Let children read 1 Kings xix. 4, and contrast his petition with God's loving answer to his prayer. Tired and hungry, he falls asleep, and an angel, after having prepared food for him, touches him and says, "Arise and eat." Refer to Ps. xxxiv. 7, and let class try to realise truth of the words. Quote verses 1 and 2 of Hymn 424, then read 1 Kings xix. 6, 7, 8, and tell that Elijah is fed and comforted until he reaches Horeb, the Mount of God.

2. *At Horeb.*—Trace journey from Beersheba, through the kingdom of Judah to Horeb (a distance of 180 miles). *Cf.* with some place known to class, and mark on sketch map, which will be filled in as lesson proceeds. Let children suggest reason for so long a journey. Probably Elijah felt need of a rest, and wished for time for prayer where he could be alone with God. *Cf.* with event in life of Moses alone with God in same mountain, and receiving help and comfort from Him.

Give brief description of Horeb, and picture cave in the cleft of the rock where the prophet now makes his home. *Cf.* with early life when he dwelt in caves.

Read S. Luke ix. 33, and let class suggest reason for Elijah's wish. Perhaps desired to stay there until God called him to die. Let children read 1 Kings xix. 9, and show that this was probably intended to teach Elijah that his Master had further need of him, and he must return to

his proper work. Tell that while here he had a vision from God. Give a vivid description of what happened; first a strong wind, then an earthquake, which caused the mighty peaks of the forest to totter and shake: then a fire, but God was not in either. He came to Elijah in a sound of gentle stillness—a still small voice. Impress grandeur of the scene, and quote verse of hymn—

"The raging fire, the roaring wind,
Thy boundless power display;
But in the gentler breeze we find
Thy spirit's viewless way."

Let children read 1 Kings xix. 13, and discuss effect on Elijah. Show that God intended the question, "What doest thou here?" to be a gentle rebuke, and lead children to see that God revealing himself in a still small voice shows that He is a God of Love. Give Elijah's answer and God's command to him to return to his work, and anoint a new King over Israel and a new prophet to succeed himself; then read verse 7 of Hymn 543.

APPLICATION

Give words of Longfellow—

"Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait,"

and tell class that God has work for each one of us to do now, and will give us help if we ask Him in prayer. Refer to Collect for the day—"Almighty and merciful God . . . faithful people do unto Thee true and laudable service; grant that we may so faithfully serve Thee." And let children commit words to memory if not already known.

Blackboard: Title and map.

Hymn 627, verse 1.

Expression Work: Children to copy sketch map from blackboard, and to draw a more finished map during the week.

Teacher's Preparation: 1 Kings xix.

Lesson XLI. FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Ploughman Prophet (1 Kings xix. 19–21)

Aim. *To give an example of ready, cheerful obedience to the divine call.*

PREPARATION

Refer to last lesson and God's command to Elijah; tell children that the prophet was only able to carry out one of these commands: the others he has to leave to his successor, whose history they are now going to hear.

PRESENTATION

(a) *Early Life.*—Elisha was apparently the son of a well-to-do farmer, and on the day on which we first hear of him was ploughing in his father's field. Point out that, although prosperous, Shaphat, Elisha's father, has brought his son up to work. Picture the scene—springtime: Elisha's wooden plough drawn by two oxen, followed by eleven others. Explain why this was customary. Probably on account of country being in a disturbed state and subject to frequent wars, which would render it unsafe for one ploughman to be working alone.

(b) *The Call.*—Suddenly the prophet Elijah appears and casts his mantle on the young ploughman. Elisha at once understands what this means, although Elijah has not spoken a word. This quiet yet solemn act showed he was to be the successor of the great prophet.

Explain custom followed in Eastern countries to-day. When any teacher or great man dies he frequently bequeaths his mantle to the follower whom he loves most dearly. This is understood to be a sign that the one who is chosen receives, together with the mantle, the power that belonged to the owner.

Let children note what happened. Immediately Elisha leaves the plough and asks Elijah if he may say farewell to his parents. Let class read 1 Kings xix. 20, and compare with S. Luke ix. 61, 62, and tell that the prophet, like our Lord, does not wish to teach any disrespectfulness to parents, but rather to show that God's work is too pressing to admit of any delay. Specially dwell on his ready obedience.

Elisha is determined to go forth in the strength of God, so slays his oxen, makes a feast for the ploughmen, and then goes to follow his new master. Let children suggest reason for slaying oxen. Probably to show that he had given up ploughing and would never return to it, but henceforth would be working in God's vineyard among God's people.

Let children notice carefully Elisha's unselfish and wise choice. Although he very soon might have succeeded to his father's wealth, for the latter was getting old, yet he preferred to follow Elijah and work for God. *Cf.* with call made to us in our baptism: "I heartily thank our Heavenly Father that He hath called me to this state of salvation," and let children see that the same grace which enabled Elisha to be faithful to the call is still ours if we ask God for it. Let them quote words, "I pray unto God to give me His grace . . . life's end."

(c) *The Work.*—Very briefly sum up the ways in which God had been preparing Elisha to take Elijah's place, while the latter had been despairing.

Compare the earlier history of the two. Elijah called from the plains and hills of Gilead, Elisha from the green meadows and peaceful fields. Lead the class to note contrast in character. Elisha, a simple, gentle, and homely kind of man, while we always think of Elijah as strong, hardy, and even fierce at times.

Tell children that for seven years Elisha was the servant of Elijah, and during that time the work so well begun was carried on in the same spirit, so that when his master was taken from him we find him living among the Israelites, devoting himself to their service, always ready to help in their troubles and share their joys.

APPLICATION

Let children read Ps. lxxi. 14, P. Bk. version, and conclude lesson by leading them to see that this was the secret of Elisha's well-spent life, and that this strength is sufficient for us to-day as it was then.

Blackboard: To consist of Ps. lxxi. 14, and verse 5 of Hymn 534.

Hymn 540, "Fight the Good Fight."

Expression Work: Children to find any texts bearing on the lesson.

Teacher's Preparation: 1 Kings xix. 19–21; *Village Life in Palestine*, by Rev. G. R. Lees, pp. 141–143; *Bible Characters*, by Principal Whyte (Oliphant); and *History of Persia*, by John Malcolm.

Lesson XLII. FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Siege of Samaria (2 Kings vi. and vii.)

Aim. *To impress the thought, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."*—Psalm xlvi. 1.

PREPARATION

Refer to last lesson. Show that Elisha's request was fully granted, his life and work showing that God had given him the spirit and power of Elijah. Picture his after life, working amongst Israelites, always ready with loving help and sympathy. Tell that Ahab is dead, a new King, Joram, reigns. He and his people fall into the same sin—idolatry. In the lesson the children will see how God punished the King and his people and also how He delivered them from their trouble.

PRESENTATION

(a) *The Siege.*—Let class read 1 Kings xx. 1, and tell that the Syrian King again fights with the Israelites during Joram's reign.

Point out on map and give brief description of Samaria—chief city of Israel—home of Joram and prophet Elisha—occupied a very strong position—very difficult to take. Very strongly protected—mountains on north, east, and south. On western side the town overlooked a valley fringed by low hills, sloping towards the sea. Knowing this the King of Assyria besieged the city and tried to make the people surrender through starvation. Tell that Israelites were brave and determined not to give in, so faced all the horrors of a long and cruel siege. Enlist sympathy for people—surrounded by enemy—no chance of escape, and suffering terribly from famine. Tell how at first prices would be high, then no food to be obtained, and people compelled to eat things unfit. Yet God was watching over His people. Let class suggest reason for delay in sending help. Tell them that Joram was grieved and thought Elisha was the cause of the trouble, so sent messengers to kill him. These did not succeed. Why?

Picture the prophet in his house surrounded by elders of city in great danger, yet kept by God, who told him of the King's intention. Let children read 2 Kings vi. 33, and show that the words "Behold this evil is of the Lord" prove that Joram has changed his mind.

It is God's hand he now sees, and he is ready to open the gates and admit the Syrians. Tell the words of Elisha assuring the King that God has not forsaken His people, and that on the morrow peace will be restored and the siege over. Read words of prophecy, and show how God uses four lepers to bring about fulfilment.

(b) *The Flight of the Syrians.*—Picture the scene. The camp of the Syrians—perfect stillness; four lepers from outside gate of city, encouraged by quiet, steal in, in search of food. Let children imagine surprise on finding camps deserted and plenty of food left. Read verse 6 for cause of flight, and suggest that God may have made use of thunder or wind; but whatever it was, Syrians were filled with fear and fled. Let class read verses 8–10. Picture what happened. Men not believing at first, then filled with hope and joy, and rushing about in their eagerness to carry the good news. Let children read verses 10–15, and comment on real reason for joy. God had delivered them from their distress. Quote the leading thought.

(c) *Peace Restored.*—Describe vividly what happened. The King sent men with horses and chariots after the Syrians—people rushed into the camps and returned laden with food and treasures. Explain 2 Kings vii. 16, and show that Elisha's prophecy had been fulfilled.

APPLICATION

Point out that God's power is the same to-day. Refer to Ps. xlvi. 1, and show that He will help in His own good time and give us those things that are needful for our souls and bodies. Let children suggest how they may be messengers to carry the good news to those in distress, and conclude lesson by quoting last verse of Hymn 165.

Blackboard: Leading thought of lesson, Ps. xlvi. 1.

"Because the frailty of man without Thee cannot but fall,
Keep us ever by Thy help from all things hurtful."

Expression Work: Copy out prayer in Collect for day.

Teacher's Preparation: Chap. xvi. of *Hist. Geog. of Holy Land*, and parts of 2 Kings vi. and vii.

Lesson XLIII. SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Boy King (2 Kings xxii., xxiii.)

Aim. *To teach that even the young can serve God well.*

PREPARATION

Write the words of the hymn—

"Just as I am, young, strong and free,
To be the best that I can be,
For Truth and Righteousness and Thee,
Lord of my life, I come"—

on blackboard, and tell children they are going to hear of a boy King who nobly carried out those words. Very briefly refer to reforms made by Hezekiah, and tell that next two Kings, Manasseh and Amon, were two very bad monarchs and led the Israelites into idolatry. When Josiah, grandson of Manasseh, succeeded to the throne, the kingdom was in a terrible state, and the people lived without God. Lead children to see during the lesson that because he loved God, Josiah encouraged his people and restored the True Faith entirely, putting an end to idolatry.

PRESENTATION

Let class read 2 Kings xxii. 1, and suggest that although nothing more is known of Josiah's mother she must have been a good woman and helped her son greatly. Tell that Josiah was very young when he began to love God. Let children read Ps. lxiii. 1, and ask what that would lead to? A desire to work for God. Refer to Confirmation, when boys and girls have an opportunity of making their decision to work for God.

Discuss what would be done until Josiah was old enough to govern. Work left in hands of ministers. In this he was most fortunate—all of them wished to restore the worship of the True God.

Tell that when twenty years old Josiah began to reform his kingdom in earnest, but had no book to guide him; the only one—that of the Law—being lost. Besides this the Temple was almost in ruins, and altars for the worship of idols were set up all over the kingdom.

Give an account of the cleansing of the Temple, and let children read 2 Kings xii. 9, to find out how money was provided. Relate story of finding the Book of the Law. Explain what it was. A copy of our Book of Deuteronomy. Show how delighted all would be, and let children suggest why the book was so valuable. (Books very scarce.) Describe reading before the King the message sent to the prophetess, and read 2 Chron. xxxiv. 21, and explain. Give account of the assembling of the priests, prophets, and people, and the reading of the Law.

Describe the scene—King standing on raised platform, making a covenant; people agreeing to it. Read 2 Kings xxiii. 3, and comment on force of example. Show how reform was carried out—breaking down of altars and the destruction of the high places where idol worship had been conducted, and lead children to appreciate intense love that the King had for God. *Cf.* with Hymn 242, "We love the place," &c., and show how true this was of Josiah. Give an account of the keeping of the Passover (2 Kings xxiii. 21, 22, 23); ask what it would remind people of, and why so appropriate at this time? God had delivered them from a great enemy, Idolatry, just as He had rescued Israel from the Egyptians. Tell that Josiah was a friend of Jeremiah, of whom class will learn in another lesson. Briefly refer to the King's death, and elicit what effect this would have on his people.

APPLICATION

Ask children to suggest why Josiah was able to do all these things, and specially emphasize the fact that he knew he belonged to God and must work for Him. Refer to Hymn 627, A. and M.

> "God made me for Himself, to serve Him here,
> With Love's pure service and in filial fear,"

and tell children these words apply equally to them. Let them suggest how they may show their love for God's house and His service, and conclude by allowing them to read words of Leading Thought. "Just as I am, young, strong and free," &c.

Expression Work: Let class find Ps. xxvi. 8 and any other texts bearing on Love for God's House and His Name, ready for the next lesson.

Teacher's Preparation: 2 Kings xxii., xxiii. (parts of), and chap. xiv., vol i., of *Leading Facts and Ideas of History*, by C. W. Whish.

Lesson XLIV. SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

A Very Important Commission for a Boy of Fourteen

Aim. *To help children to realise what it means to be a "Child of God," for*

> *"Thou camest not to thy place by accident,*
> *'Tis the very place God intended for thee."*

PREPARATION

Let children read title: lead up to idea that a commission is special work entrusted to one's care by someone in authority. Refer to present day commissions for adults, and for children in everyday life; elicit that giver of commission always trusts receiver, while latter promises obedience. Give name of boy in title: Jeremiah.

PRESENTATION

(1) *Early life of Jeremiah.*—Refer to lessons read in Church at this time of year: and to children's knowledge of Bible: to gather that Jeremiah was a prophet of Judah: wrote Books of Jeremiah and Lamentations: and some of the Psalms. Tell that he was son of Hilkiah, a priest (refer to lesson on Josiah), lived at Anathoth, small town on low hill, an hour's walk north-east of Jerusalem. (Make sketch map on blackboard, and let children copy it.) Josiah, King of Judah, was twenty years old when Jeremiah twelve. Hilkiah was one of his advisers. Question on reign of Josiah: picture out in graphic detail what would presumably be life of Jeremiah at this time; quiet religious home (Jeremiah's writings show great knowledge of history, laws, religion of Jews); frequent walks to Jerusalem past Mount of Olives; over Brook Cedron; up slopes of Moriah. (Refer to map and to walk of our Lord the night of betrayal.) Sorrowful looks at Temple of God, with walls partially broken down, and altars and groves for worship of false gods within Temple area; his talks with his father on subject (children encouraged to offer suggestions as to tone and import of these conversations); misery of both at condition of things: their hopes of reform centred on young King who was known to be on God' side. Let children read 2 Kings xxii. 1, 2. Lead them to see that Josiah would be the hero of young Jeremiah: who would watch for him when in Jerusalem and long to help him.

(2) *The Giving of the Commission.*—Tell children when Jeremiah was fourteen he received a very important commission. Explain

that when he received it he thought he was too young to give satisfaction, but was told the Giver had known him all his life: had singled him out for special work: would help him in every way. Let children suggest who might give the commission. Tell he received it from the King of Kings. Emphasise that Jeremiah's previous life had been preparation for this moment. Write lines from "Aim" on blackboard, and explain.*

(3) *The Commission.*—Read to children Jeremiah i. 7–10. Let them write on papers the following part of it for future reference, "I ordain thee . . . to deliver thee, saith the Lord," and then lead them to make following summary. "God required obedience and promised His help." Bring out clearly how God trusted him. Refer to similar trust, promise and requirement in Baptismal Covenant.* Call attention to two main points of commission. (*a*) To root out, pull down, destroy, idolatry; (*b*) To plant and build up the worship of God. Call attention again to fact that he was only fourteen. Ask children if they remember about a boy of twelve doing similar work. Let them read S. Luke ii. 41–52, where our Lord is described as "about His Father's business." (*Cf.* Call of Samuel.*) Lead them to see that soldiers in army of King of Kings may be of any age,* and refer to Confirmation, when they will promise obedience and receive help. Question on Josiah's reforms which began four years later, and let them picture part played by young prophet. Tell that throughout a long and difficult life he kept his promise to God.

APPLICATION

Take throughout lesson, especially the parts marked *.

Blackboard:

(1) Title of lesson.
(2) "Thou camest not," &c.
(3) Sketch map (see page 106).

Catechism: The answer, "My Godfathers and Godmothers," &c.

Hymn: "The Son of God goes forth to war." A. and M. 439.

Teacher's Preparation: 2 Kings xxii.; 2 Chron. xxxiv.; Jer. i.; S. Luke ii. 41–52.

Books consulted for this and following lessons: Commentaries on Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, Prophets of Israel (Cornill); *Life and Literature of Hebrews* (Lyman Abbott).

Lesson XLV. EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

On Active Service for the King of Kings

Aim. *To help children to realise that God's service always calls for great bravery and earnest effort, but that we can always be*

"Strong in the Lord of Hosts
And in His mighty power."

PREPARATION

Let children read Jeremiah's commission from their papers. Print title on blackboard and question as to meanings and connection with prophet. Let children make suggestions as to whether the keeping of commission would be easy or difficult. * Refer to keeping of commissions in their own lives.

PRESENTATION

(1) *Work during reign of Josiah.*—Tell children that Josiah reigned eighteen years after Jeremiah received his commission. Recall fact that Hilkiah was one of foremost helpers of King, and let children suggest that young Jeremiah would eagerly help his father and the King. Lead them to see what a help it would be to Jeremiah to have his father and King both on God's side.

* Refer to similar helps children have in King, Clergy, Teachers, Parents, Friends. Question briefly on Passover of Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 21): Death of Josiah at Megiddo, and coronation of Jehoahaz (2 Kings xxiii. 29, 30). Try to get them to understand feelings of Jeremiah at this time: grief at death of King: dismay (had God forgotten to go forth with army): uneasy wonder as to policy of new King: determination to be true to his commission whatever happened.

(2) *Deposition of Jehoahaz in three months and Enthronement of Jehoiachim as Egyptian Vassal by Pharaoh Necho.*—Tell children above facts. Describe unrest of country and condition of Judah under these kings, who both did "that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." Work of reform brought to a standstill: Temple worship neglected: idols set up: King and people openly wicked.

(3) *Special Work of Prophet.*—Let children read Jer. xxvi. 1–7, and help them to summarise it. Get them to realise situation: Opposition to all in authority in land: one man to make a stand for the right: one man to be openly true to God when the multitude were false.

Lead children to see that he would call to mind God's promise, "Be not afraid, for I am with thee to deliver thee." * Ask the children if there is any similar promise we can call to mind whenever we are in difficulty: "Lo, I am with you alway . . . world" (Matt. xxviii. 20). Write this, and promise to Jeremiah, on blackboard and compare.

(4) *Delivery of Message.*—Describe in detail. Jeremiah standing alone in Temple court: people gathering round him as they come up to worship: Jeremiah's message, "Jerusalem shall be destroyed because of wickedness of people": crowds gathering to hear: princes coming from King's house to Temple staying to listen: prophets and priests mingling with crowd: angry murmurs: shouts to him to deliver his message at his peril: threats of death: cries of treason: actual violent handling of prophet by multitude: great calmness of prophet—

"Strong in the Lord of Hosts
And in His mighty power." } [Write on blackboard.]

Effect on crowd of his heroism: hesitation: wonder: silence: eager consultation: shame: admiration by noblest of them: declaration of his innocence by princes and elders: crowd only partially appeased: escape of prophet with great difficulty through help of his friend Ahikam.

APPLICATION

Parts marked *. Ask children if they know of anyone on active service for King of Kings. Let them find Baptismal Service in their Prayer Books, and read part beginning, "do sign him with sign of the cross," &c., and so get them to see that all baptized Christians are on Active Service. Let them suggest any difficulties they have to overcome, and by reference to lesson let them see they can all do so "by God's help." Complete verse of hymn on blackboard—

"Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror."

Tell children they can read another incident in the life of this hero for themselves during the week in Jer. xxxvi. Let all children find Collect for Second Sunday after Trinity, "O God, who never failest to help," &c. Ask them to read it through to themselves, thinking of the lesson. All kneel and use it as a prayer.

Hymn 270, A. and M. "Soldiers of Christ, arise."

Teacher's Preparation: 2 Kings xxiii.; 2 Chron. xxxv.; Jer. xxvi.; Jer. xxxvi.

Lesson XLVI. NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

To be supplied by Children at End of Lesson

Aim. *To help children to realise that Jeremiah was one of God's heroes.*

PREPARATION

Sum up in a few words substance of two preceding lessons. Question briefly on Jer. xxxvi.

PRESENTATION

Tell children following facts: Reigns of Jehoiachim and Jehoiachin taken up with war with Nebuchadnezzar, who eventually deposed Jehoiachin and took him, his mother, servants, princes, officers, mighty men, and craftsmen prisoners to Babylon. He also took treasures from King's house and Temple, left Zedekiah twenty-one years of age on throne as his vassal.

(1) *Rebellion of Zedekiah.*—Zedekiah plotted to throw off yoke with help of Egypt. Elicit Jeremiah's disapproval because of Zedekiah's oath of fealty to Nebuchadnezzar. * Refer to Collect Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity, and let children read from Epistle, "Wherefore putting away lying," &c. Contrast Zedekiah and Jeremiah. Describe Chaldean siege of Jerusalem: closely guarded gates: fortified walls: march of Egyptians to King's assistance: dispersal for a time of Chaldean army: end of siege: joy and excitement in city: ridicule and contempt of Jeremiah, who had prophesied city's destruction.

(2) *Arrest and ill-treatment of Jeremiah.*—Tell that weary prophet determined to retire to Anathoth. Picture scene: weary but still faithful prophet: misunderstood: reviled: threatened: hated: just leaving Jerusalem to seek peace in his native place, seized roughly by his enemies (his own countrymen), dragged back to city—charged with treason and desertion to Chaldean army. Explanations ridiculed: tried before princes, who refuse to let him plead his cause: and refuse to listen because he has preached (at God's command) destruction of their city and advised submission to Babylon: they strike him as he stands defenceless, and order him to be thrown into deepest dungeon. Zedekiah questions him, trying to make him deliver a different message: prophet remains faithful. *Cf.* Ps. cxix. 161–168.

(3) *Second Siege of Jerusalem.*—Draw sketch map of Jerusalem, to show its almost impregnable position. Tell that siege lasted eighteen

months. Let children suggest that famine ultimately compelled surrender. Picture enemy entering city: putting King and princes in chains: burning palace and houses: setting fire to Temple: taking all chief men prisoners: setting Jeremiah at liberty.

(4) *After Siege.*—Gedaliah ruler over few left. Question on work these would have to do: clear ruins: till land: plant vineyards. Picture sadness of aged prophet as he saw his beloved city in ruins: but remembering his commission, again setting to work to try to get people to remain true to God.

(5) *Departure to Egypt.*—Tell how after six months people determined to leave their country and seek refuge in Egypt, and in spite of the wishes and entreaties of prophet they did so, and compelled him to accompany them. Tell them that from the Bible we hear no more of this hero, but tradition says he was killed in Egypt by his own ungrateful countrymen. Ask children what Jeremiah had accomplished during his whole life, and when they realise how little it seems, ask whether his life was a failure or a success. After receiving answer tell briefly the parable of failure and success to be found at end of Beatrice Harraden's *Ships that Pass in the Night*, where earth's failure on reaching heaven found she was there named success, while earth's success was there named failure. * Repeat Longfellow's lines—

> "Lives of great men all remind us
> We can make our lives sublime,
> And, departing, leave behind us
> Footprints on the sands of time."

APPLICATION and Expression.—During lesson parts marked *. Ask children to write down a title suitable for the lesson, and write most suitable on blackboard. Reverently repeat together the prayer, "O God, the protector," &c. Collect Fourth Sunday after Trinity, and afterwards sing hymn (A. and M. 428), "The saints of God," verses 1, 2, 3.

Teacher's Preparation: 2 Kings xxv.; 2 Chron. xxxvi.; Jer. xxxvii., xxxviii., xli.; Ps. cxix. 161–168. Collect. Epistle Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Children's Preparation for Coming Week: Ask children to try and find any psalm that might have been written by Jeremiah.

Blackboard:

Title of lesson (supplied by ch.).
Sketch map. See p. 106.
Quotation from Longfellow.

Lesson XLVII. TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

A Solitary Hero in a Foreign Land

Aim. *To teach children that a "Child of God" can always be sure of God's help when doing God's work.*

PREPARATION

Reference to Jeremiah's life and work, to lead up to Longfellow's lines with which last lesson ended, and to thought that such influence would be lasting. Teacher tell children that Ezekiel, the hero mentioned in title, would know Jeremiah.

PRESENTATION

(1) *Men of Judah, Captives in Babylon.*—Elicit from children that captive race would be despised and scorned by men of Babylon. Explain their condition: not kept as prisoners: forbidden to return home: compelled to work under Babylonish masters. Picture them thinking sadly of Jerusalem: home: Temple: Jeremiah: as they sat "by the waters of Babylon," and tried to "sing the Lord's song in a strange land" (Ps. cxxxvii.).

(2) *Call of Ezekiel.*—Describe. Ezekiel, a priest, walking alone at sunset by river Chebar, meditating: suddenly seeing heaven open and having "visions of God." Refer to visions of Elijah at Horeb: and Elisha at Dothan: Read Ezek. i. 1–4, and summarise message Ezekiel was to deliver. Compare with message Jeremiah had so fearlessly delivered.

(3) *Bravery necessary in Delivery of Message.*—Describe in graphic detail. Captive people hoping that Jerusalem and Temple will be saved and they themselves delivered: Ezekiel passionately attached to city and Temple, sharing in above hope, with message from God announcing destruction of city and Temple: meeting by waters of Babylon: false prophets buoying up people with hopes of deliverance: Ezekiel's message: its delivery: attempts to cry him down: derision and scorn (Ezek. ii. 1–6): terrible loneliness of prophet afterwards. Tell from whence he derived his strength, and give meaning of his name, "God will strengthen." *Get children to realise the power this belief in God's help would be to Ezekiel. By questioning get them to see that our Christian names carry with them the same promise. Let them repeat Catechism answer, "Yes, verily," &c.

(4) *News from Jerusalem.*—Refer to previous lessons, and obtain that Zedekiah's alliance with Egypt, which began favourably, ulti-

mately ended in disaster: picture people eagerly waiting for news: at last seeing Zedekiah and all the mighty men of Israel brought in chains to Babylon. Picture gloom and despair at next meeting "by waters of Babylon."

(5) *Ezekiel's Work as Watchman of Israel.*—Tell children that Ezekiel was now recognised as a true prophet. Give special name of God's choosing, "Watchman of Israel," and by questioning lead children to see that a watchman is one responsible for safety of others in times of danger. Try to get children to make suggestions as to special danger of Israelites at this time: viz. idolatry, because of misery of position, and pomp and grandeur of idol worship of Babylon.

(6) *Ezekiel's Plan: Love and Worship of God manifesting itself in Love of Man.*—Ask what Ezekiel as Watchman could do to counteract this danger, and so lead up to his plan: (1) Reinstitution of a special service to the God of Israel each Sabbath Day, so that it would be manifest to Babylonians that Israel had a God and was not ashamed to worship him: (2) Encouragement of all who worshipped God to show their love to Him by being true, loyal, and loving to their fellow captives. Tell how that, strengthened by this regular worship and fellowship, there grew up in that strange land a race of strong, good, brave people, about some of whom they will hear in future lessons.

APPLICATION

Parts marked *. Compare Ezekiel's plan with our Lord's answer to lawyer, S. Luke x. 27, given as a general rule for daily life, and encourage children to seek their strength in same way—*e.g.* regular worship of God; also let them compare Ezekiel's plan, and our Lord's answer with the Duty towards God and Duty towards neighbour, and then build up together blackboard summary.

Blackboard:

Ezekiel's Plan. Love of God followed by Love of Man.

Our Lord's Summary. } "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, &c., and thy neighbour as thyself."

Our plan given to us in Catechism. } The duty towards God. The duty towards neighbour.

Hymn 34, A. and M., "On this day, the first of days."

Teacher's Preparation: Ezek. i., ii., iii., vi., xiii., xviii., xx.; Ps. xv.. cxxxvii.

Preparation by children before next lesson. Verses from Ps. xv. illustrated by above lesson.

Lesson XLVIII. TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Four Captive Princes (Daniel i.)

Aim. *To teach children that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and the "beginning of knowledge."*

PREPARATION

A few questions on life and work of Ezekiel, to lead children to see that there would doubtless be many of the captives in Babylon "faithful to their God, and to their Captain true." Title of lesson to be written on blackboard, and children told that to-day's lesson is concerned with four of these heroes.

PRESENTATION

(1) *The Four Princes carried Captive to Babylon.*—Give names: Daniel, Ananias, Azarias, Misael (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego). Let children find passage in Benedicite, and offer suggestions as to why their names were put in this song of praise. Describe graphically following details: Arrest of four young princes about fourteen years of age in Jerusalem after siege of Nebuchadnezzar, when Jehoiachim was King of Judah: prisoners' last look on home, city, and Temple: weary march across hot dreary Assyrian Desert (trace on map): entry into magnificent city of Babylon with its strong wide brick walls, massive brass gates, strong fortifications, many temples, grand palaces, fine public buildings, beautiful gardens, rushing river, busy streets, triumphant rejoicings of Chaldeans. Crowds of people staring at hapless prisoners of war: latter's hopelessness and wonder as to what is to become of them.

(2) *Chaldean Royal School.*—Let children read Dan. i. 1–6, and give summary. Explain that Daniel and his three friends would live in Royal School with number of boys same age but different races. School course occupied three years; pupils were fed at King's expense, and were taught astrology, Chaldean literature, playing musical instruments, architecture and building construction. Explain that the social life was contrary to God's laws for Jews—eating, drinking, and rioting being excessive.

(3) *Resolution of the Four.*—Picture Daniel and three friends in consultation—they were Jews: loved their God: would begin true to God and continue so. Let children read their plan, Dan. i. 8–14. Explain "pulse and water," vegetarian diet. Picture them making request to Melzar: his conditional promise: their anxiety at first meal: simple food placed before them: King's food taken away:

astonishment of other youths: questioning: calm answer, "Our God forbids such living: we will be true to Him": ridicule: taunts. Picture the four afterwards: can they live through it: yes, by God's help they can and will.

* Speak to children about power of friendship, and lasting nature of such if based on love of God and determination to do the right.

(4) *Success of Trial.*—Let children read Dan. i. 15, 16, to find out that trial was a success. Get them to see that ridicule would be gradually lived down: and firmness and self-denial of youths would be an influence for good in school.

(5) *Work in School.*—Lead children to see that firmness of character acquired by above, manifested itself in all their work: they were in earnest: made the best of their opportunities: worked with a will: overcame their difficulties: could always be trusted: their master loved them. *Cf.* St. Luke ii. 52.

(6) *Examination and its Results.*—Describe ending of course: excitement as day of examination approached: wondering what result would be: personal interview with King: searching questions: result of examination: Daniel and his three friends best students in school, and have posts of honour in Chaldean Court given to them. Let children read Dan. i. 18–21. Picture the four receiving congratulations of Melzar: thanking him for his help, care and trust, and then retiring to thank God.

APPLICATION

Parts marked *. Question children as to secret underlying the success of the four. Let them read Dan. i. 17. Question as to its meaning, and lead them to see, by reference to lesson, that God gives success if we co-operate with Him. He gives us powers and opportunities to use them: it is our part to seize the opportunities and make use of the powers. Refer to parable of the Talents, and then let children read Prov. i. 7, and Ps. cxi. 10, and commit both verses to memory.

Expression: Let them write down following lines:

Written on Blackboard before lesson

"In God's own might, we gird us for the coming fight,
And strong in Him, whose cause is ours
In conflict with unholy powers
We'll do the right."

Let children see how suitable they are to lesson: and ask them to write down during week any other suitable lines.

Catechism: Duty towards neighbour, "To keep my body," &c.

Teacher's Preparation: Dan. i.; 2 Kings xxiv.; Benedicite, S. Matt. xxv. 14–30; Prov. i. 7; Ps. cxi. 10.

Lesson XLIX. TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Title—"But if not" (To be supplied by Children during Lesson) (DANIEL iii.)

Aim. *To lead children to understand what is meant by words "To put my whole trust in Him."*

PREPARATION

Refer to lesson on Four Captive Princes to bring out fact that they owed exalted position to persevering use made of God-given gifts and opportunities. Emphasise point by letting children copy from blackboard.

Write on Blackboard before lesson

"The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward through the night."
(*Longfellow.*)

PRESENTATION

Probably outlines of story of Shadrach, &c., in fiery furnace will be known, and teacher's task will be to clothe the story with deeper meaning.

(1) *Attitude of Chaldeans to Jewish Princes.*—Question to gain that Chaldeans would be jealous of prominent positions of Jewish captive princes, and so tried to discover faults in them to cause their overthrow. Refer to past life of faithfulness to God and man, and also to our Lord's words. "He that is faithful in little will be faithful also in much."

* Discuss with children their opportunities for faithfulness.

(2) *Dedication Festival of Image of Nebuchadnezzar.*—Describe scene: beautiful walled city of Babylon in background: enormous golden image set up in open air on plains of Dura south-east of city (enormous pedestal for statue recently discovered in plain): Nebuchadnezzar, at whose command image had been erected, himself present in royal state: vast multitude of Jews, Greeks, Assyrians, Chaldeans, assembled at King's command: the ceremony: preceded by speech of herald. Let children read Daniel iii. 4, 8: call attention to despotism of King: contrast with our King.

(3) *Attitude of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.*—Get children to realise feelings of three on hearing punishment entailed by disobedience to King's command. The choice they had to make immediately, either loyalty to God followed by painful death, *or* disloyalty to God, obedience to King Nebuchadnezzar, and life. Show how the choice

of the former was the result of lives of faithfulness. * Ask children whether they are building up "loyal" or "disloyal" characters. Tell them "character may be manifested in the great moments, but it is made in the small ones," and explain the statement.

(4) *Heroes of the Heavenly King before Earthly King.*—Question children on what happened when band played, and let them supplement their knowledge by reading Dan. iii. 9–12. Describe scene: the sudden strains of band: lowly worship of crowd: three heroes standing erect: news brought to King: fury of monarch, openly defied by captives he had himself raised to posts of honour: astonished, watching, listening crowd: scarcely veiled triumph of jealous rivals: bringing of three men to King: King's question: firm, strong, heroic answer, "If it be so . . . set up." Question children to bring out significance of answer; summarise it: "Our God has the power to deliver us, but if He doesn't choose to do so, and we have to die, we will be true to Him, we can trust Him." Lead children to find out most important words in answer, "But if not," and write on blackboard as title to lesson. * Ask children to repeat "Duty towards God," and let them pick out words in it that have acquired deeper meaning through the lesson: "To love Him with all my heart." "To put my *whole* trust in Him."

(5) *Punishment ordered by Earthly Monarch overruled by Heavenly* — Read remainder of story graphically to children. Explain "Son of God"—marginal reading, "A Son of the Gods": someone above or beyond man. King recognised he was in presence of a power he could not fathom. Let children conjecture respective feelings of (1) King, (2) jealous rivals, (3) Jews in crowd, (4) other people in crowd, (5) officials of King, (6) three heroes, during carrying out of King's orders, and overruling of them by God. * Conclude story with following lines, which children might commit to memory—

"They who trust God wholly
Find God wholly true."

APPLICATION

Parts marked *.

Expression: Let children find Ps. xxxiv., and write on their papers any verses from it that are specially applicable to lesson. Comment on choice.

Hymn 290, A. and M. "Through all the changing scenes of life." Special attention to be called to verses 3, 4, 5, before hymn is sung.

Teacher's Preparation: Dan. iii.; Ps. xxxiv.

Lesson L. TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Belshazzar's Feast (Daniel v.)

Aim. *To lead children by means of Bible lesson to understand somewhat of meaning of words in Duty towards Neighbour. "To do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me."*

PREPARATION

Refer to lesson on four captive princes to remind children of Daniel's important position in Court of Babylon, and to bring them further to consider that keynote of his character was steady progress "by God's help." Emphasise that "the trivial round, the common task," were done by him for King of Kings, and hence he was ready when great opportunities came. * Refer to children's own opportunities for faithful service, and give our Lord's words, "He that is faithful in little will be faithful also in much."

PRESENTATION

1. *The Feast.*—Describe great hall in palace supported by many massive pillars, plastered walls decorated with paintings of men and animals in brilliant colours: room lighted with flaming torches in twisted brass stands: long low tables loaded with costly foods and wines: the feast itself a religious ceremony in honour of Belshazzar, great god of Babylonians. (Refer to name of King.) Belshazzar's guests, a thousand of chief men of Babylon.

(2) *The Challenge to God of Israel, and answer to challenge.*—Let children read Dan. v. 2–4. Explain significance. Vessels taken from Temple brought in to be used at feast of another god, to signify to all guests that Belshazzar had defeated God of Israel: direct challenge to God. Describe feast in progress: worship of idols (Dan. v. 4), sudden appearance of fingers: intense silence of terror and astonishment: fixed gaze of guests: writing on plastered wall against candlestick taken from God's Temple (draw attention to significance of this): mysterious words: abject fear of King: hurried assembling of magicians and soothsayers: reward offered: their inability to decipher words or tell their meaning.

(3) *Sending for Daniel.*—Let children suggest from previous knowledge of Daniel that *he* might have been able to interpret. Tell Queen's words concerning him (Dan. v. 10–12). Describe interview between King and prophet: reward offered for interpretation, robe of scarlet and chain of gold (signs of exalted position), third ruler in

kingdom. (Compare with similar reward offered to Joseph for reading Pharaoh's dreams.) Give Daniel's answer to vindicate his integrity.

(4) *Position of Daniel.*—He heard incident from King: knew words and meaning: was in presence of Eastern despot whose will was law: who could have him put to death without trial if offended with him. (Refer to Shadrach, &c.): knew words and meaning would greatly anger King, had many enemies at court who would rejoice in his downfall: interpretation might cost him his life: but it was a message from God; he would be true to Him whatever happened. Let children write down following—

> "Do thy duty, that is best,
> Leave unto thy God the rest" (Longfellow).

Tell children following. Bishop Ridley when a young man was going to preach in certain Church. The King, who was hostile to him, intended to surprise him by being present. A friend knowing this warned him on his way to Church: "Have a care, Master Ridley; the King will be there." Back came answer, "I shall have a care, for the King's King will be there."

* Ask children if they live in the presence of King of Kings as Daniel and Bishop Ridley did.

(5) *Daniel's Speech, and what followed.*—Give setting: great hall: listening, fearful, expectant crowd: terror-struck King: mysterious writing: fearless prophet. Read Daniel's speech and explain. Try to get children to suggest what would follow: dismay: hurried preparations for departure: precautions taken in city. Tell children Medes had been unsuccessfully besieging city for some time. Call attention to attitude of King to Daniel. Let children read Dan. v. 29–31. Explain that Peres and Upharsin are practically same word in original.

APPLICATION

Parts marked *. Bring home lesson of story to children, by letting them trace idea of God's judgments contained in Ps. lxvii. Let children find Ps. xci., and find verses applicable to lesson: and also any verse containing a resolution they might make—*e.g.* verses 2 or 4. Write it on blackboard at dictation of children, and embody resolution in prayer at conclusion.

Hymn 3, A. and M., part 2.

Expression: Ask children to write out during week any connection they can see between hymn and lesson.

Teacher's Preparation: Dan. v.; Ps. lxvii., xci.; Gen. xli. 40–44.

Lesson LI. TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Daniel in the Den of Lions (Daniel vi.)

Aim. *To teach children somewhat of the meaning and value of Prayer.*

PREPARATION

Refer to two incidents in life of Daniel already taken, and by questioning lead children to give outlines of story of Daniel in Lion's Den. Refer to last lesson to gain that Darius was reigning in Babylon. Let children read Dan. vi. 1–5.

PRESENTATION

Question to gain that Daniel was second ruler in kingdom: was loved and trusted by King: that his life and work were of such a character that no fault could be found in either. Refer to Shadrach, &c., and also to trial of our Lord, S. John xviii. 38. Bring out significance of words "concerning the law of his God," showing that Daniel was not ashamed of his prayers to God: all his friends and enemies knew he prayed regularly. * Refer to words in Baptismal service, "do sign him . . . Christ crucified." Give children a moment or two to think whether they are as true in this respect as Daniel was.

(1) *The Decree.*—Let children read Dan. vi. 6–9. Get them to realise subtlety of suggestion by means of what they know of Daniel's character. Refer to power of his adversaries, presidents of kingdoms, governors, princes, counsellors, captains, all against one man; and he knew it. *But God* knew it too, and therein lay his comfort and strength.

(2) *Daniel's estimate of Prayer.*—Work out in detail. Communion with *God* had sustained him in hour of first great agony when he was dragged a weary captive lad across hot Assyrian desert to Babylon: it had helped him to remain true to God in his difficult position in Chaldean school: it had aided him through all storms, troubles, and perplexities of Eastern Court Life: the times he spent in prayer were the happiest in his life: God was with him, and he knew it: he rose from his prayers always refreshed, guided, strengthened: he heard the decree: realised the awful penalty: but never hesitated, he could not do without praying to God for thirty days, no, not for one day, or even for a part of one.

Show that all greatest heroes have valued prayer—Moses, David,

Elijah, Shadrach, our Lord. Give instance of General Gordon who used to place a handkerchief outside his tent on battlefield, to secure him from interruption while praying. * Ask question, "What does prayer mean to us?" Leave time for thought, but take no answer.

(3) *Daniel's Bravery and its Result.*—Let children read Dan. vi. 10–15, and lead them to see significance of fact that Daniel still prayed by open window, not ashamed of God, *therefore* not afraid of enemies. Describe how watchful enemies saw him: seized opportunity thus afforded them of compassing his downfall: accused him to King: latter's grief and unsuccessful attempts at plans of deliverance: explain unalterable character of Law of Medes and Persians. Picture Daniel calm in strength of God, awaiting arrest. Contrast his calmness and trust with hatred and triumph visible in faces of enemies; and also with anguish of King. Comment on words of Darius after he had unwillingly passed dreadful sentence on him "Thy God . . . deliver thee." Get children to see that Daniel's fearless faithfulness to God turned attention of King to God. Compare with Acts iv. 13. (Give context.)

(4) *Deliverance of Daniel.*—Describe night of agony spent by sleepless King: his glimmering hope that Daniel's God might be able to save his servant: his hurried walk at daybreak: his faltering, agonised question: "O Daniel . . . *living* God . . . lions," his overpowering joy and thankfulness, Daniel's subsequent promotion. Comment on words "*living God*," to show that Daniel's faithfulness had wrought entire change in King. Further illustrate change by reference to second decree, Dan. vi. 26–27. Tell children that Daniel's trust, faith, and knowledge increased daily, so that all Israel recognised him as one of their greatest heroes and saints. Ezek. xiv. 14, 18, 20; xxviii. 3.

APPLICATION

Parts marked * also let children think for a few moments in silence on the following questions to be written on blackboard.

Blackboard: (1) What did prayer mean to Daniel? (2) What does prayer mean to me?

Expression: Ask children to think about the two questions during week and write down any Biblical incident, text, or poem about Prayer.

Ps. lxiii. 1–8. To be read or chanted.

Teacher's Preparation: Dan. vi.; Ezek. xiv. 14, 18, 20, xxviii. 3; Ps. lxiii. 1–8. Words from Baptism Service quoted above.

Lesson LII. TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

A Veteran in the Army of the King of Kings

(Haggai i. 1–11)

Aim. *To sum up teaching of eight preceding lessons, i.e. to leave impression that "Members of Christ, the children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven," have their King's work to do, unto their lives' end.*

PREPARATION

Write title on blackboard; question as to meaning of veteran: from answers received build up that we generally think of veteran as one who has done well on active service, and then, when old enjoys well earned rest with honour. Lead up to fact that in army of King of Kings, all are on active service as long as life lasts. Write on blackboard name of veteran. *Haggai.*

PRESENTATION

(1) *Life before Return from Captivity.*—Tell briefly how he was carried away while young to Babylon (refer to Ezekiel, Daniel, Shadrach, &c.); his youth, early manhood, prime of life spent in captivity. Let children read edict of Cyrus (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22–23). Emphasise God's work that was to be done by returning exiles. Describe homeward march (trace journey on map): great joy and thankfulness of people on reaching Palestine. Psalm cxxvi.

(2) *First days in Jerusalem.*—Question as to state of Jerusalem: feelings of returned exiles when they saw it "an heap of stones." Picture Haggai and elders standing amid ruins and thinking of former glory of city and Temple. Let children suggest first act would be sacrifice of thankfulness. Tell, new altar raised on site of former one. Question as to first work of people: refer to edict of Cyrus and lead children to suggest first steps in rebuilding: carting away rubbish: digging foundations: preparing materials. Emphasise fact that *all* helped. Read Ezra iii. 11–13 to get idea of service when foundation stone was laid.

* Refer to laying "foundation stones" at present—need for all to help with prayers and money: reason for use of Ps. cxxvii.

(3) *Opposition of People of Land, and Action of Returned Exiles.*—Tell that people of land offered assistance, but Zerubbabel, leader of returned exiles, refused because they were not worshippers of God: anger of people: letter to Cyrus, containing false accusations: edict of latter ordering building to cease. Question as to what returned

exiles might have done under circumstances, to bring out that they did nothing, and thus showed half-heartedness and lack of purpose. Tell, that people built houses, sowed wheat and barley, built threshing-floors, cultivated olive trees and vines, God prospered them year by year, they grew rich, but made no effort to build God's house.

* Refer to building of Churches at home and abroad, and our obligation to help.

(4) *Failure of Harvest and Recognition of God's Judgment by Haggai.*—Let children read Haggai i. 1–11, question as to meaning. Picture Haggai's sadness, zeal, enthusiasm. Tell of letter to Darius: search made in Babylon: edict of Cyrus found: permission to build granted: money given for purpose, Ezra vi.

* Question children to lead them up to idea that God always helps His workers.

(5) *Building of Temple.*—Let children suggest (1) eagerness of workers, (2) work of Haggai: encouraging and inspiring workers: reminding them of God's presence and help. Describe his and their thankfulness and joy when corner-stone laid December 24th of same year, fifteen years after foundation-stone. Tell that Temple was completely restored in four years and dedicated with great joy. Let children read Ezra vi. 14–16. Emphasise that rebuilding was mainly due to God's veteran Haggai.

APPLICATION

Parts marked *. Read to children S. Matt. vii. 24–27, and by reference to lesson get them to realise they must all be "doers of the word." Refer to all lessons on prophets teaching us same lesson, and by questioning get them to build up following—

Blackboard Summary:

Life is a battle well worth the fighting.
Our Leader and Captain—our Lord.
Victory assured if we fight in His strength.

Catechism: Let all children repeat answer to "Dost thou not think," &c.

Hymn 437, A. and M., "For all the Saints." Refer to suitability of hymn to all lessons on prophets. Read verse beginning "O may Thy soldiers," and ask children to try and make it a real prayer. Conclude with Collect for Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity to be said by teacher and children together.

Teacher's Preparation: Haggai i. 11; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22–23; Ezra iii. 11–13; vi.; S. Matt. vii. 24–27; Ps. cxxvi., cxxvii.

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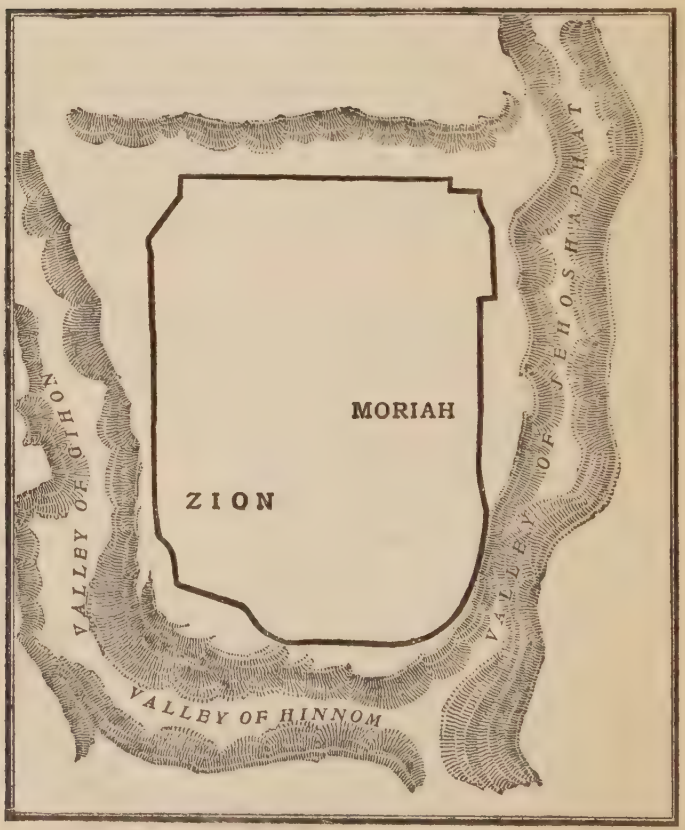

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